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A LIFE'S LABOURS

IN SOUTH AFRICA

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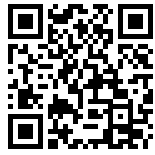

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A LIFE'S LABOURS

IN

SOUTH AFRICA:

THE STORY OF THE LIFE-WORK

OF

ROBERT MOFFAT,

APOSTLE TO THE BECHUANA TRIBES.

THE PROFITS OF THIS WORK WILL BE DEVOTED TO THE FRENCH MISSION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE present volume has been prepared to meet numerous inquiries for a connected account, brought down to the present time, of Mr. Moffat's missionary work in South Africa.

The particulars regarding his earlier labours have been chiefly taken from Mr. Moffat's own well-known volume, "Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa;" the remainder has been gleaned from his letters, and from the various published accounts of the London Missionary Society. A graphic and most interesting narrative of Mr. Moffat's career appeared in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* (published by J. C. Juta, Cape Town), of July and August, 1870; from these Articles, also, numerous extracts have been made in the following pages.

The profits of this work will be devoted to the French Mission in South Africa; in which Mr. Moffat takes a deep interest, and which, in consequence of the complete failure of its funds through the disastrous Franco-German war, is in need of immediate and generous help.

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LIFE'S LABOURS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

CALLED TO THE WORK.

Ordination of Missionaries, October, 1816—Early Years—The turning-point of Life—Rev. W. Roby—The Fifth Commandment—The Congregational Ministers of 1816—Early Missions to South Africa—Missionary Spirit of Dr. Andrew Reed.

In October, 1816, a meeting of deep interest to the cause of Missions was held in Surrey Chapel, London. Nine young men were on that occasion ordained as missionaries, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society. Their names were Bourne, Darling, Platt, and John Williams, set apart for the South Sea Islands; and Evans, Kitchingham, Taylor, John Brownlee, and Robert Moffat, appointed to South Africa.

Of that chivalrous little band, two survivors alone remain,—John Brownlee, the father of Kaffir Missions, and Robert Moffat, the apostle to the Bechuana tribes. The former of these two still abides in the land of his adoption, where, in Kaffir phraseology, "he has fixed a pole like the Kaffir-boom and Wild

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Plum, which, wherever they are planted, take root, bring forth leaves and flowers, and bear fruit, although he who planted them may in time become unknown to any one." The latter, in the month of June, 1870, came out from the far African Interior, where he had so long exerted an influence for good; failing health necessitating a return to his native land. On that occasion, colonists of every class assembled to do him honour; and public meetings, comprising representatives of all denominations, were convened to welcome and thank the devoted Christian missionary for his life-long services in behalf of the benighted sons of Africa.

Robert Moffat is a native of Scotland, having been born at Ormeston, near Haddington, in 1795. His youthful years were spent at Carron Shore, near the Great Carron Ironworks, where his father held an appointment in the Customs. When about twelve years of age, at the request of a ship's captain, a friend of his father, he was induced to try a taste of sea-life in a coasting vessel; but this not suiting his disposition, he returned to school; and having a strong desire to study botany and horticulture, he was apprenticed as a "Scotch gardener." Some time after, his father being appointed to Inverkeithing, Fifeshire, he took service in the Earl of Moray's gardens, near that town. After remaining there a year, he was invited to a situation in Cheshire, where he continued between two and three years, pursuing his studies with great avidity.

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His parents were a pious, God-fearing pair. The consistent example of his father produced upon the boy its natural effect. From his mother he received instruction of a more positively religious nature. The worthy woman had set her heart upon his "knowing from a child the Holy Scriptures, as able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." When about to quit his native country for the situation in the north-west of England, he was earnestly besought by her to promise, before going, that he would read the Bible every day, morning and evening. Sensible of his own weakness, and of, perhaps, his boyish disinclination, he parried the question. But at the last moment she pressed his hand. "Robert," she said imploringly, "you *will* promise me to read the Bible, more particularly the New Testament, and most especially the Gospels —those are the words of Christ Himself; and there you cannot possibly go astray." There was no refusing then; it was the melting hour. "Yes, mother," he answered, "I make you the promise." He knew, as he remarked in relating the circumstance, that the promise, once made, must be kept. "And oh!" he added, "I am happy that I did make it!"

It was in Warrington that the cardinal occurrence in the life of the now aged missionary happened. On a calm summer's evening the meditative youth was walking into that town from High Leigh, when, just as he had crossed the bridge, a placard caught his eye. It was the first of the kind he had

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ever seen. The two lines that struck him most were "London Missionary Society," and "Rev. William Roby, of Manchester." They combined to rule the whole current of his future life. He felt as if riveted to the spot, and seemed, perhaps, to passers-by, like one learning to read from large letters. The meeting announced had been already held, and therefore he could not attend it. But enough: the placard alone had made him, in his own words, "another man;" and, within those few hours of coming to Warrington and returning to Leigh, "an entire revolution had taken place in his views and prospects." Who can exclude a Divine influence from such a change so brought about? The stories his mother had told him about the Moravian Brethren in Greenland flashed back upon his memory. There lay before him "a flattering and lucrative prospect, far beyond what such a youth as he could expect." But that bait now tempted him in vain; all at once it had "dwindled into nothingness, when compared to the service of Christ among the perishing heathen." Hearing him speak thus, persons who had the power and will to serve him, said "his brains were turned." "And so they were," quoth he, "but the right way."

The same influence that had made the mute and bygone placard speak to his heart, induced him, stranger as he was and youth, to go to Manchester, and seek out Mr. Roby. Not without some sense of misgiving he knocked at the door. Let him tell

the sequel: "He received me with great kindness, listened to my simple tale, took me by the hand, and told me to be of good courage."

The final consequence was, that Robert Moffat offered his services to the Directors of the London Missionary Society. When the late Mr. William Jones, of the Religious Tract Society, took a similar step, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, of Stockwell, was deputed by his brother Directors to call upon the young man's parents, and gain their consent. "Sooner," said the father, "than I would sign consent to my son's going out as a missionary, I would place my hand upon the block, and lose it." There was, therefore, an end of the matter. "My dear lad," said Dr. Waugh, who was in the chair, "your father will not consent; and, though quite satisfied with your examination, we cannot accept you, because we don't think you strong enough just yet to jump over the Fifth Commandment." With Robert Moffat the case was different. To him also was put the question, "Have you made your parents acquainted with your purpose?" He answered, "No," and a faintness came over him as he uttered the word, for he was afraid lest they should oppose it. But their answer was very unlike to that of the elder Jones. "We have thought," they said, "of your proposal to become a missionary; we have prayed over it; and we cannot withhold you from so good a work."

Mr. Moffat has more than once declared that he

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never sat at the feet of any Gamaliel. But, if he had not been taught by one learned in the law, he at least enjoyed, before going out, the instructions of a teacher proficient in the Gospel; and, though his reference to the subject is of a qualified character, it may be here introduced as affording some clue to the manner in which he had been prepared for the missionary enterprise. Speaking of his arguments on moral philosophy with the astute Africaner, he says, "I was determined not to be driven from the sentiments entertained by a vast majority of the respected advocates of religion in my own native land of light (*i. e.*, Scotland), sentiments which I preferred even to those of the late venerable Roby, of Manchester, *at whose feet I sat for a short season.*" We find him, however, in connection with the record of his sermon, during his first visit home, preached before the Directors of the London Missionary Society, recurring to his old master's "Lectures on Revealed Religion," for useful hints on these recondite subjects. It is evident, therefore, that the good man who first encouraged his missionary aspirations, took pains to foster the holy inclination, and to prepare the mind and heart of its ingenuous subject for the work to which he had been led, by a Divine influence, to give himself.

Of all the known men who joined the Congregational ministry at or about the same time (1816), whether in the United Kingdom, in the

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British Colonies, or in heathen lands, Thomas James, William Ellis, John Brownlee, and Robert Moffat appear to be the only survivors. John Burnet, James Stratten, and William Urwick are gone; and with them, Charles Barff and George Platt, of the South Seas, and, as need hardly be added, John Williams, the glorious "Martyr of Erromanga." Only a year before, John Morison, the subsequent biographer of "The Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society," was set apart to the order which he long adorned, by the joint hands of venerable men belonging to his own denomination, and to the principal churches of his native country; but we have no hint, at that early day, of the future distinction of his now eminent brother Scotchman, who simply informs us, in the preface to his principal publication, that "John Williams and he were accepted by the Directors at the same time, and designated to the work of God, at Surrey Chapel, on the same occasion."

Missionary enterprise in South Africa was at that time yet in its infancy. The first who entered upon the work was George Schmidt, one of the Moravian Brethren, who arrived in Cape Colony as early as 1736. His labours were brief, being summarily interrupted by the Dutch East India Company, who regarded with disfavour his attempts to instruct the Hottentots. Not until 1792 did the Government consent to the resumption of the mission; when

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Mansveldt, Schwinn, and Kuehnell (also Moravians) were permitted to sail for the Colony. From that time, the missionary spirit gained ground and increasing support. Members of the Dutch Church formed an Association for sustaining and promoting it. A few years afterwards Van der Kemp and Edmonds arrived and pushed on into Kaffirland, on the north-east: while Kircherer, Kramer, Edwards, Anderson, the Albrechts, Ebner, Schmelen, and others, took up stations among the scattered parties of Bushmen, Hottentots, and Griquas, towards the Zab and Orange rivers, on the north-west. The field thus opened was wide, but the labourers were few.

When, five years only after the decease of Van der Kemp, (the first public defender of the Hottentot, who, on the 15th of December, 1811, closed his eyes on this world, after breathing out the Christian assurance, "All is well,") Moffat went forth, a stripling, into the vacated field, it was little thought how amply, in a while, that large loss would be repaired. When the elder Andrew Reed, then in the twenty-seventh year of his age, and in but the third of his ministry, first attracted general attention in London by his noble sermon on the mournful occasion, and, at the Missionary Communion of that year, "took the cup in pledge of his everlasting adherence to the missionary cause," the heart and mind of Robert Moffat, perhaps, were simultaneously experiencing those stirrings of interest in that cause which so soon afterwards issued in the consecration

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of himself to its service. Their further community of sympathy in the same grand enterprise was subsequently shown in the association of Mr. Reed with Dr. Philip, on a tour through Holland and parts of Prussia, to take part in a series of missionary gatherings, having especial reference, no doubt, to the Dutch and German Christians at work in the Cape Colony; and also in his co-operation with Mr. Pringle, at the express wish of Dr. Philip, in carrying through the press those "Researches in South Africa," the publication of which inflicted a mortal blow upon the hydra-head of Slavery. No wonder that services like these caused the rising philanthropist to be looked to as the most desirable successor to a man so able, and so much missed, as William Orme, whose death occurred while he was rendering them; or that a man of his penetration and sagacity should have been among the first to antedate the coming eminence of Robert Moffat.

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CHAPTER II.

THE SPHERE OF LABOUR.

Departure for the Cape of Good Hope—Detained in the Colony—Dutch Farmers—Preaching to the Hottentots—The Africaner Family—Predictions of Evil—Journey to Namaqua-land—Arrival at Africaner's Kraal—Discouraging position—Commencement of the work.

ROBERT MOFFAT sailed for the Cape of Good Hope on the last day of October, 1816, being barely of age. For more than fifty years, therefore, he has been in the high places of the field. Like the pioneers of Protestant Missions in India, he was tried by a discouraging reception. Before proceeding to preach the Gospel to the heathen outside of the Cape Colony, it was necessary that he should have the sanction of the British Governor. This was at first refused. The ministers of the Reformed Church and the military chaplains were alone privileged to preach; and there was a suspicion that missionaries going to the tribes of the interior, would carry with them guns and ammunition, which would destroy the peace of the country. Day after day his applications to the Government were made without

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success. The post of Resident with one of the Kaffir chiefs was offered to him, where he might act as Government agent and as Christian instructor at the same time; but he declined to be fettered, as he felt he must be in such a position, and sought the untrammelled liberty of a missionary of the Cross.

But while thus detained in suspense within the colonial territory, Moffat's time was not wasted. He took up his abode with a pious Hollander, who taught him Dutch; and, on leaving that hospitable roof, he was qualified to preach to the Boers, and to as many of their native servants as had acquired a smattering of the imported language.

The second immigrant from the Low Countries whom he encountered was considerably rougher than the first. Permitted at length to go up the country, he begged a night's lodging with all the bashfulness of timorous youth. The burly farmer roared out his reply like a beast of the forest; and the negative put on the young stranger's modest request was less terrible to him than the stern tone in which it was conveyed. Fear, however, had not wholly put to flight the mother-wit of the young Scot. Thinks he to himself, "I'll e'en try the guid wife." The homeless stranger, far away from his "ain mither," met with a different reception in that quarter. To be sure he should have both bed and board; but whither was he bound, and what his errand? Well, he was bound for Orange River, to

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teach the rude tribes the way of salvation. "What! to Namaqua-land, that hot, inhospitable region; and will the people there, think you, listen to the Gospel, or understand it if they do?" Be that as it might, when asked by the kind-hearted frau to preach it to her and her gruff husband, he promptly returned, "Oh, ay; nought else would give him greater delight." This, too, was to be a mingled congregation; for the surly Boer—less surly, though, than he seemed—had a hundred Hottentots in his service. But these did not at first appear. Looking down the dark vista of the long barn, young Moffat could but dimly descry, besides host and hostess, three boys and two girls. "May none of your servants come in?" said he to the Boer. "Eh!" roared the man; "Hottentots! Are you come to preach to Hottentots? Go to the mountains, and preach to the baboons; or, if you like, I'll fetch my dogs, and you may preach to them!"

On that hint the quick-witted missionary spake. He had meant to challenge the "neglect of so great salvation;" but, taking the word out of his rough entertainer's lips, he read as his text, "Truth, Lord; yet *the dogs* eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." The repeated text was fastened as a nail in a sure place, as thoroughly as if it had been driven home by a master of assemblies. "No more of that," cried the Boer, like the man in the play; "I'll bring you all the Hottentots in the place." He was as good as his word. The barn was crowded,

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the sermon was preached, and the congregation dispersed. "Who," said the farmer, in a more musical voice, "who hardened your hammer to deal my head such a blow? I'll never object to the preaching of the Gospel to Hottentots again."

"The Dutch farmers," observed Mr. Moffat many years afterwards, "notwithstanding all that has been said against them by some travellers, are, as a people, exceedingly hospitable and kind to strangers. Exceptions there are, but few, and perhaps more rare than in any other country under the sun." This candid remark stands connected with his second interview, after a long interval, with the seemingly surly Boer who had once made as though he would refuse him so much as a night's lodging.

It is related of an aged minister, who had been deputed to put a youthful candidate for orders through a private examination, that he directed the neophyte to wait upon him at six o'clock on a cold morning. Punctual to the minute, the lad stood shivering at the door. Announced to the great man upstairs, he was kept waiting for two hours in a fireless room, before it suited the awful examiner to appear. Then came the dreaded ordeal. What did *a b* spell? They spelt *ab*. And what did *b a* spell? They spelt *ba*. And so of the rest. "That'll do, young man," said the humorist, and showed him the door. But the report to the Board was highly favourable. "I can recommend him," said he, "without hesitation. First, I kept him two hours

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in the cold, and proved his patience; then I insulted him by the childishness of my questions, and tried his temper. Both tests he bore perfectly well, and I recommend him with entire confidence." The rough reception which, in like manner, young Moffat had first encountered from the Dutch farmers was a good preparation for the trials of a long life among far less promising materials. "You must have perpetrated some crime," was in effect the salutation of the natives, "and have been driven away from your own people." They could not otherwise account for his coming among them. "What is the reason you do not return to your own land?" asked one chief. "If your land was a good one, or if you were not afraid of returning, you would not be so content to live as you do, while people devour you," said another. All in vain he told them he was come to speak to them of Jesus. "*Máka héla*," —all lies,—was the only answer they would deign to give him.

The path of duty and the scene of action which had at length opened to the young missionary was on the north-west Border, beyond the Orange River, where a Hottentot family, known as the Africaners, had gathered a body of marauders about them and fixed their abode. Their chief had been outlawed from the Colony, for the cold-blooded murder of a farmer named Pienaar, who was shot down in the presence of his wife and family. Commandos had gone out against him, and rewards were offered for

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his capture; but these only roused him and his followers to further outrages on the scattered residents of the border, until the name of "Africaner" became a terror throughout the Namaqua-land frontier.

It was to the place of this banditti chief that Moffat set forth, in company with the missionary Ebner, who for some time before had been a resident there, and whose influence had led several of the people to accept Christianity and to be baptized. The farmers from whom they received hospitality as they passed to the boundaries of the Colony warned him of the desperate character of Africaner, and unceremoniously predicted his early death. One said, the outlaw chief would set him up for a mark for his young men to shoot at; another, that he would strip off his skin and make a drum of it to dance to; another, that he would make a drinking cup of his skull; and an old motherly lady, wiping the tear from her eye, bade him farewell, saying, "Had you been an old man it would have been nothing, for you would soon have died, whether or no; but you are *young* and going to be eaten up by that monster!"

Undeterred, however, by these reports, with a firm trust in the protecting care of Him in whose service he was engaged, and with a full faith in the all-subduing influences of that Gospel which it was to be his life-work to proclaim, Robert Moffat proceeded onward in his journey. Over rocky mountains and parched and arid plains, the only break in which

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was the occasional green line of mimosas that fringed some rivulet's course, as it streaked like a silver vein the sterile waste—over a country on which "the curse of Gilboa" seemed to rest, where the fountains were few and precarious, and human beings there seemed to be none—the Missionary and his party still pressed forward.

"Having travelled," he writes, referring to one occasion in this journey, "nearly a whole night through deep sand, the oxen began to lie down in the yoke from fatigue. The next day, arriving at the place where we had hoped to find water, we were disappointed. As it appeared evident that if we continued the same route we must perish from thirst, we turned northward, over a dreary, trackless, sandy waste, without one green blade of grass, and scarcely a bush on which the wearied eye could rest. Becoming dark, the oxen unable to proceed, ourselves exhausted with dreadful thirst and fatigue, we stretched our wearied limbs on sand still warm from the noontide heat, it being the hot season of the year. Thirst aroused us at an early hour; and finding the oxen incapable of moving the waggon one inch, we took a spade, and, with the oxen, proceeded to hollow in a neighbouring mountain. Here we laboured for a long time, digging an immense hole in the sand, whence we obtained a scanty supply, exactly resembling the old bilge-water of a ship, but which was drunk with an avidity which no pen can describe. Hours were occupied in in-

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cessant labour to obtain a sufficiency for the oxen, which, by the time all had partaken, were ready for a second draught; while some, from the depth of the hole and the loose sand, got scarcely any. We filled the small vessels which we had brought, and returned to the waggon over a plain glowing with a meridian sun; the sand so hot, that it was distressingly painful to walk on. The oxen ran frantic, till they came to a place indurated, with little sand. Here they stood together, to cool their burning hoofs in the shade of their own bodies; those on the outside always trying to get into the centre."

Three days had they to remain on this burning plain, with scarcely a breath of wind stirring; what there was of it feeling as if coming from the mouth of an oven. They had only tufts of dry grass with which to make a small fire; but little, however, was needed, for they had scarcely any food to prepare. No human being was to be seen, not a single antelope or beast of prey made its appearance; but in the dead of the night the distant roar of the lion was heard on the mountain, where they had to go twice a day for their nauseous but grateful beverage.

The appearance of things upon Moffat's arrival at Africaner's kraal was very discouraging. The chief was cool and reserved. An unpleasant feeling existed between the missionary Ebner and the people, which culminated in a quarrel with the chief's brother, and in Mr. Ebner's determination to

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leave the place directly, and move on to the Chief Bondelzwarts, from whom he had received an invitation to labour. Moffat was thus left alone with a chief and people suspicious in the extreme and jealous of their rights, which had been obtained, as it were, at the point of the sword. In his journal he writes: "I had no friend or brother with whom I could participate in the communion of saints—none to whom I could look for counsel and advice; a barren and a miserable country; a small salary of £25 per annum; no grain, and consequently no bread—and no prospect of getting any, from the want of water to cultivate the ground—and destitute of all means of sending to the Colony."

It was truly "a barren and a miserable country" in which the missionary was now placed. "What is its character and appearance?" had been his inquiry, on approaching it, of one who had spent years in the land. "Sir," replied the stranger, "you will find plenty of sand and stones, a thinly scattered population, always suffering from want of water, and plains and hills roasted like a burnt loaf under the scorching rays of a cloudless sun." "Of the truth of this description," adds Mr. Moffat, "I soon had ample demonstration." Sometimes, for years together, the rivers there are not known to run; after the last stagnant pools are dried up, the natives dig holes or wells in their beds, sometimes to the depth of twenty feet, from which they procure water, but of very inferior quality. Branches of

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trees are placed in these excavations, and, with great labour, under a hot sun, the water is handed up in wooden vessels, and poured into artificial troughs, from which the panting herds partially satiate their thirst. Thunderstorms are eagerly anticipated, for by these only does rain fall; but frequently these storms pass over with tremendous violence, striking the inhabitants with awe, yet without a single drop of rain descending to cool and fructify the parched and burning waste.

The young missionary's sincerity and fitness for the work which he had undertaken was thus at the very commencement crucially tested, but his chivalrous devotion rose as hardships and difficulties increased. He commenced stated services, opened a school, and itinerated amongst the neighbouring "werfs" or villages. His food was milk and meat, living for weeks together on one, and then for a while on both; but frequently having recourse to the "fasting-girdle." After a day's occupation he would often, in the stillness of the evening, silently retire to the rocky boulders in the neighbourhood of the station, to commune in sorrow and joy with Him in whose service he had embarked; sometimes, too, to think over the past, and of the home and friends he had left, perhaps for ever; and occasionally to draw from his violin some favourite sacred melody, or the loved airs of the minstrelsy of his native country.

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CHAPTER III.

AFRICANER.

Conversion—Earnestness in acquiring instruction—Transformation in his character—His regard for Mr. Moffat—Visit to Cape Town—Africaner's Dream—His Death.

THE first-fruits of the Mission was the conversion of the celebrated Africaner, the terror of the whole colonial border. During the nine years of his hard labours in Namaqua-land, the missionary seemed to himself like one beating the air, or talking to the deaf. But the gain of this one man was a great success. "As I was standing," says Mr. Moffat, "with a Namaqua chief, gazing at Africaner, in a supplicating attitude entreating parties ripe for a battle to live at peace, 'Look!' said he, 'there is the man, once the lion, at whose roar even the dwellers in far distant hamlets fled in terror from their homes.'" This also was the man at whose mild command the women about the kraal collected bundles of mats and sticks like fishing-rods, to make for the missionary appointed by the Directors in London, in half an hour, a house which sufficed him for six

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months, though sometimes invaded by a duel betwixt bulls, and more frequently by hungry curs or hissing serpents. "I was wont," says the proprietor of this lodge in the vast wilderness, "to pour out my soul among the granite rocks, now in sorrow, and then in joy; and more than once I took my violin, once belonging to Christian Albrecht, and, reclining upon a huge mat, in the stillness of the evening, played and sang the well-known hymn, a favourite with my mother,—

> Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
> To sing thy great Redeemer's praise."

More than once or twice, too, he was reminded of that dear woman; had he needed anything to bring *her* to his remembrance. "My dear old mother," he says, "to keep me out of mischief in the long winter evenings, taught me to knit and to sew. When I would tell her I meant to be a man, she would say, 'Lad, ye dinna ken whar your lot will be cast.' She was right; for I have often had occasion to use the needle since. Once, I remember, she showed me how a shirt might be smoothed, by folding it properly, and then hammering it with a piece of wood. Resolving one day to have a nice shirt for the Sabbath, I folded up one; and, having prepared a suitable block, I laid it, not on a smooth hearthstone, but on fine granite, and hammered away in good earnest. Africaner came by, and said, 'What are you doing?' 'Smoothing my shirt,' I answered. 'That is one way,' he replied. And so it was; for,

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on holding it up to view, I perceived it was riddled with holes, some of them as large as the point of a finger."

Africaner was no ordinary character, and his mind once aroused by the quickenings of a higher life, knew no rest till it found it for evermore in Him who can alone give rest unto the soul. He attended every service with such regularity, that it might as well have been doubted of the return of the morning's dawn as of his attendance on the appointed means of grace. To reading, in which he was not very fluent, he attended with all the assiduity and energy of a youthful believer; the Testament became his constant companion, and his profiting appeared unto all. At this period he was often to be seen under the shadow of a great rock, nearly the live-long day, eagerly perusing the pages of Divine inspiration; or in his hut he would sit, unconscious of the affairs of a family around, or the entrance of a stranger, with his eye gazing on the blessed Book, and his mind wrapt up in things divine. Often, too, at night he would sit on a great stone at the door of the missionary's habitation, conversing till the dawn of another day, on creation, providence, redemption, and the glories of the heavenly world.

At such seasons the chief would repeat to his friend and teacher, generally in the very language of Scripture, those passages which he could not fully comprehend. He had no commentary, except the living voice of the missionary; nor had he the

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aid of marginal references; but he soon discovered the importance of consulting parallel passages, which an excellent memory enabled him readily to find. He did not moreover confine his expanding mind to the volume of revelation alone, though experience had already taught him that it contained heights and depths, and lengths and breadths, which no man may comprehend. But he was led also to look upon the book of nature; and he would regard the heavenly orbs with an inquiring look, or cast his eye on the earth beneath, and, regarding both as displays of creative power and infinite intelligence, would inquire eagerly about endless space and infinite duration. Often, when the missionary, sitting with him and others who wished to hear his questions answered, would describe the majesty, extent, and number of the works of God, the chief would at last rub his hands on his head, exclaiming, "I have heard enough. I feel as if my head was too small, and as if it would swell with these great subjects."

The change thus effected in the heart of Africaner, was lasting. "During the whole period I lived there," says Mr. Moffat, "I do not remember having occasion to be grieved with him, or to complain of any part of his conduct; his very faults seemed to 'lean to virtue's side.' One day, when seated together, I happened, in absence of mind, to be gazing steadfastly on him. It arrested his attention, and he modestly inquired the cause. I

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replied, 'I was trying to picture to myself your carrying fire and sword through the country; and I could not think how eyes like yours could smile at human woe.' He answered not, but shed a flood of tears."

Wonderful was the transformation wrought by Divine grace in this "lion" of Namaqua-land. He who before had mocked at the suffering inflicted by his own hand, now "wept with those that wept;" and wherever he heard of a case of distress, thither were his sympathies directed. Notwithstanding all his spoils of former years, he now had little to spare, but was ever on the alert to stretch out a helping hand to the widow and fatherless. At an early period Mr. Moffat himself became an object of his charity; for, finding out that the missionary sometimes sat down to a scanty meal, he presented him with two cows, which, though in that country giving little milk, often saved him from many a hungry night. In like manner the love of war gave way to the spirit of peace; and although the missionary could not expound to him that the "sword of the magistrate" implied that he was calmly to sit at home and see Bushmen or marauders carry off his cattle and slay his servants, yet, so fully did he understand and appreciate the principles of the Gospel of peace, that nothing could grieve him more than to hear of individuals or villages contending with one another. He who was formerly like a firebrand, spreading discord, enmity, and

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war among the neighbouring tribes, would now make every sacrifice to prevent anything like a collision between two contending parties; and when he might have raised his arm and dared them to lift a spear or draw a bow, he would stand in the attitude of a suppliant, and entreat them to be reconciled to each other, and, alluding to his past life, he would add, "What have I now of all the battles I have fought and all the cattle I took but shame and remorse?"

Africaner's love for his friend and teacher was sincere and lasting, and many were the proofs of it which Mr. Moffat experienced. During one season of sickness, when the extreme heat of the weather, together with his living entirely on meat and milk, had brought on Moffat a severe attack of bilious fever, which in the course of two days induced delirium, opening his eyes in the first few lucid moments, he saw Africaner sitting before his couch, gazing on him with eyes full of sympathy and tenderness. A small parcel, containing a few medicines, being near, Moffat requested the chief to hand it to him; taking from it a vial of calomel, he threw some of it into his mouth, for scales or weights there were none. Upon this Africaner, the big tear standing in his eye, asked if Moffat died, how they were to bury him. "Just in the same way as you bury your own people," was the reply; together with an assurance that he need be under no apprehensions if the missionary were

called away, for a written testimony should be left of his kindness. This gave him some comfort; but his joy was full when he saw Mr. Moffat speedily restored again and at his post, from which he had been absent only a few days.

The outlawed robber chieftain now submitted himself in all things to the missionary, as "his guide, philosopher, and friend;" and when, after some time, circumstances required Mr. Moffat to visit Cape Town, he expressed his readiness to accompany him there, although the step was a hazardous one; for the inhabitants of the Colony had not forgotten the atrocities committed by him, and he knew that a reward of one thousand rix-dollars had been offered for his head.

The visit of Africaner to Cape Town excited considerable attention at the time. "Some of the worthy people on the borders of the Colony," writes Mr. Moffat, in a passage which we cannot refrain from quoting entire, "congratulated me on returning alive, having often heard, as they said, that I had been long since murdered by Africaner. Much wonder was expressed at my narrow escape from such a monster of cruelty, the report having been spread that Mr. Ebner had but just escaped with the skin of his teeth. While some would scarcely credit my identity, my testimony as to the entire reformation of Africaner's character and his conversion was discarded as the effusion of a frenzied brain. It sometimes afforded no little entertain-

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ment to Africaner and the Namaquas to hear a farmer denounce this supposed irreclaimable savage. There were only a few, however, who were sceptical on this subject. At one farm a novel scene exhibited the state of feeling respecting Africaner and myself, and likewise displayed the power of Divine grace under peculiar circumstances. It was necessary, from the scarcity of water, to call at such houses as lay in our road. The farmer referred to was a good man in the best sense of the word; and he and his wife had both shown me kindness on my way to Namaqua-land. On approaching the house, which was on an eminence, I directed my men to take the waggon to the valley below, while I walked toward the house. The farmer, seeing a stranger, came slowly down the descent to meet me. When within a few yards, I addressed him in the usual way, and, stretching out my hand, expressed my pleasure at seeing him again. He put his hand behind him, and asked me, rather wildly, who I was. I replied that I was Moffat, expressing my wonder that he should have forgotten me. 'Moffat!' he rejoined, in a faltering voice; 'it is your *ghost!*' and moved backward. 'I am no ghost,' I replied. 'Don't come near me!' he exclaimed; 'you have been long murdered by Africaner.' 'But I *am* no ghost,' I said, feeling my hands, as if to convince him, and myself too, of my materiality; but his alarm only increased. 'Everybody says you were murdered; and a man told me he had seen your

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bones;' and he continued to gaze at me, to the no small astonishment of the goodwife and children, who were standing at the door, as also to that of my people, who were looking on from the waggon below. At length he extended his trembling hand, saying, 'When did you rise from the dead?' As he feared my presence would alarm his wife, we bent our steps towards the waggon, and Africaner was the subject of our conversation. I gave him in a few words my views of his present character, saying, 'He is now a truly good man;' to which he replied, 'I can believe almost anything you say, but *that* I cannot credit. There are seven wonders in the world; that would be the eighth.' I appealed to the displays of Divine grace in a Paul, a Manasseh, and referred to his own experience. He replied, *these* were another description of men; but that Africaner was one of the accursed sons of Ham, enumerating some of the atrocities of which he had been guilty. By this time we were standing near to Africaner, on whose countenance sat a smile, for he well knew the prejudices of some of the farmers. The farmer closed the conversation by saying, with much earnestness, 'Well, if what you assert be true respecting that man, I have only one wish, and that is, to see him before I die; and when you return, as sure as the sun is over our heads, I will go with you to see him, though he killed my own uncle.' I was not before aware of this fact, and now felt some hesitation whether to discover to

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him the object of his wonder; but knowing the sincerity of the farmer, and the goodness of his disposition, I said, 'This, then, is Africaner!' He started back, looking intensely at the man, as if he had just dropped from the clouds. 'Are you Africaner?' he exclaimed. The chief arose, doffed his old hat, and making a polite bow, answered, 'I am.' The farmer seemed thunderstruck; but when, by a few questions, he had assured himself of the fact that the former bugbear of the border stood before him, now meek and lamb-like in his whole deportment, he lifted up his eyes, and exclaimed, 'O God, what a miracle of Thy power! what cannot Thy grace accomplish!' The kind farmer, and his no less hospitable wife, now abundantly supplied our wants; but we hastened our departure, lest the intelligence might get abroad that Africaner was with me, and bring unpleasant visitors."

The operations of the Holy Spirit on the awakening mind of this once savage chieftain were most wonderful. These seem to have been first excited under the ministry of Christian Albrecht. Subsequent to that period, his thoughts were frequently occupied while looking around and surveying the "handiworks" of God; and such questions as these would then arise within him: "Are these the productions of some great Being?—How is it that His name and character have been lost among the Namaquas, and the knowledge of Him confined to so few?—Has that knowledge only lately

come to the world?—How is it that He does not address mankind in oral language?" He became more bewildered yet when he thought of the spirit of the Gospel message—Good-will to man. He wondered whether the book he saw some of the frontier farmers use said anything on the subject; and concluded that if they worshipped such a being, he must be one of a very different character from that God of love to whom the missionaries directed attention.

At a period when the chieftain's judgment appeared to be wavering, and he seemed to be about to dismiss for ever all thoughts about revelation, death, and immortality, he had a most remarkable dream, which gave to his mind a bias it never afterwards forsook. "Africaner was a man," remarks Mr. Moffat, "who never dealt in foolish or untruthful commodities. In the development of his Christian experience, his motto was, 'Thus saith the Lord.' The following dream I heard him relate only once; and it seemed then to have been revived in his mind by looking at a mountain opposite to which we sat, and along the steep sides of which ran a narrow path to the top.

"He supposed, in his dream, that he was at the base of a steep and rugged mountain, over which he must pass by a path leading along an almost perpendicular precipice to the summit. On the left of the path, the fearful declivity presented one furnace of fire and smoke, mingled with lightning. As

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he looked round to flee from a sight which made his whole frame tremble, one appeared out of those murky regions, whose voice, like thunder, said that there was no escape but by the narrow path. He attempted to ascend thereby, but felt the reflected heat from the precipice (to which he was obliged to cling) more intense than that from the burning pit beneath. When ready to sink with mental and physical agony, he cast his eyes upwards beyond the burning gulf, and saw a person standing on a green mount, on which the sun appeared to shine with peculiar brilliancy. This individual drew near to the ridge of the precipice, and beckoned him to advance. Shielding the side of his face with his hands, he ascended, through heat and smoke, such as he would have thought no human frame could endure. He at last reached the long-desired spot, which became increasingly bright; and when about to address the stranger, he awoke."

Upon being asked what was his interpretation of the dream, he replied, that it haunted his mind for a long time, like a thorn in the flesh, and he could bear to reflect on it only when, as he said, with great simplicity, "I thought the path was the narrow road leading from destruction to safety, from hell to heaven; the stranger I supposed to be that Saviour of whom I had heard, and long were my thoughts occupied in trying to discover when and how I was to pass along the burning path:" then, with tears in his eyes, he added, "Thank God, I have passed."

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The Rev. J. Archbell, Wesleyan missionary, in a letter to Dr. Philip, thus faithfully delineates the closing scene of the life of this remarkable man:—

"Africaner was a man of sound judgment, and of undaunted courage; and although he himself was one of the first and severest persecutors of the Christian cause, he would, had he lived, have spilled his blood, if necessary, for his missionary. When he found his end approaching, he called all the people together, after the example of Joshua, and gave them directions as to their future conduct. 'We are not,' said he, 'what we were, *savages*, but men professing to be taught according to the Gospel. Let us then do accordingly. Live peaceably with all men, if possible; and if impossible, consult those who are placed over you, before you engage in anything. Remain together as you have done since I knew you. Then, when the Directors think fit to send you a missionary, you may be ready to receive him. Behave to any teacher you may have sent as one sent of God, as I have great hope that God will bless you in this respect when I am gone to heaven. I feel that I love God, and that He has done much for me of which I am totally unworthy. My former life is stained with blood; but Jesus Christ has pardoned me, and I am going to heaven. Oh, beware of falling into the same evils into which I have led you frequently; but seek God, and He will be found of you to direct you.'"

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CHAPTER IV.

THE BECHUANA MISSION.

Early efforts to establish the Mission—Request of the Chief Mothibi—Appointment of Mr. Hamilton and Mr. and Mrs. Moffat to the work—Disheartening results—Dr. Campbell's Critique on Mr. Moffat's labours—The Sechuana Language—Its Difficulties—Constant change in its Dialects—Incompetence of Interpreters—Severe Drought—The Missionaries ordered to leave—Firm attitude of the Missionaries—Perils from Wild Beasts.

THE visit to Cape Town was most important to Mr. Moffat in respect to his future career. Here he was united to the partner and sharer of his toils and labours, Miss Smith, to whom he had been long previously engaged, and who had arrived from England. The Rev. John Campbell, whose previous visit to the Colony had enabled him to excite an intense interest throughout the whole of Great Britain in favour of African Missions, had now again landed in Cape Town. He and Dr. Philip were deputed to examine the several stations of the London Missionary Society, and Mr. Moffat was pressed to accompany them, preparatory to being appointed to the Bechuana Mission.

Most unwilling was he to leave his little flock of

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Namaquas; nor did he consent until Africaner fully acquiesced in his doing so—indulging the hope (which, however, was never realized) that he and his people might remove to the same neighbourhood, as they had frequently been invited to do by some Bechuanas with whom they had traded. But in other respects this new field of labour was a more inviting one to the young missionary, whose zeal and energy in the apostolic work had been increased and strengthened by what he had already experienced. The station which he was to occupy was one of the foremost posts in heathen soil, and beyond it were regions thickly populated by races who had never seen the face of a white man, and to whom Christianity and its attendant blessings were as yet unknown.

Twenty years prior to this (in 1800) an attempt had been made to establish a mission among the Bechuanas. The first messengers to them were Messrs. Edwards and Kok, connected with the Dutch Missionary Society in Cape Town. Not being able to effect anything as missionaries, they turned their attention to trading. The former, after acquiring some property, retired to the Colony and became a farmer; the latter was shot by two of his servants at the Kuruman fountain, where his grave is still to be seen.

The travellers Lichtenstein and Burchell, and the Rev. J. Campbell, afterwards visited these people; and it was in accordance with a request made to

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Mr. Campbell, by the chief Mothibi, that the London Missionary Society sent Messrs. Evans and Hamilton to Lithakoo in 1816, with the most sanguine hopes of a hearty welcome. When, however, the Bechuanas found that the missionaries came empty-handed, and had nothing to trade or barter, the chief and his people declined to receive them, and actually re-yoked their waggons and ordered them away. The next effort made to obtain a settlement amongst them was more successful; and in 1821, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. and Mrs. Moffat had fairly settled there upon their mission work.

For a long time they had to struggle with numerous and most disheartening difficulties. The people had no religious system, no idea of a Creator, no belief in the immortality of the soul—nothing which might form a groundwork for conveying to them instruction in spiritual things. "They looked on the sun with the eyes of an ox." For a bit of tobacco, or some little equivalent, the missionary might gain their attention for a little time; but his efforts to convey to them the idea of a Creator and of a Saviour appeared as futile as the attempt to transform a granite rock into arable land. For more than five years the people thus continued callous and indifferent to all instruction, unless it were followed by some immediate temporal benefit.

But though cast down, there was no yielding to despair. "Mary," said Moffat one day to his wife, "this is hard work." "It *is* hard work, my love," she

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made answer; "but take courage, our lives shall be given us for a prey." "But think, my dear," he replied, "how long we have been preaching to this people, and no fruits yet appear." The wise woman, it is said, rejoined after this manner: "The Gospel has not yet been preached to them *in their own tongue wherein they were born.* They have heard it only through interpreters, and interpreters who have themselves no just understanding, no real love of the truth. We must not expect the blessing till you be able, from your own lips and in their own language, to bring it through their ears into their hearts." "From that hour," said Mr. Moffat, in relating the conversation, "I gave myself with untiring diligence to the acquisition of the language."

The eloquent author of the "Martyr of Erromanga" (who, alas! is no longer represented by one living son bearing his honoured name) pays a noble tribute to Mr. Moffat's labours at this period: "There is a member of the missionary brotherhood who could rehearse facts illustrative of the power of the Gospel over the hearts of men (and women too) such as could not fail unspeakably to interest. He could tell of the murderous feats of Africaner, the terrible Caffrarian chief, that direst monarch of Namaqua-land. He could show that man now in all the simplicity of childhood, and with more than woman's tenderness, acting the part of a peacemaker, pouring forth rivers of regret for the torrents of blood which once he caused

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to flow, and earnestly imploring the head men of his region to unite with him in efforts to establish unity and concord. This missionary, whose name is Moffat, could give the history of a ten years' experiment upon the tribes of the desert, comprehending labours, trials, privations, and dangers, such as even a Wellington never imagined, much less experienced. He knew not their language, and there was none to teach it him. Regardless of their filth, and fearless of their ferocity, he went and lived alone among them. He waked, he slept, he wandered, he hunted, he rested, he ate and drank with them, till he had thoroughly mastered their language; and then he began to preach to them, in their own tongue wherein they were born, the redemption of Christ. Through this long space of ten years, amid difficulties and distresses of all kinds, now and again aggravated by threats of murder, he laboured patiently on, though without one sign of success. At length they listened, and at last began to tremble, and finally to weep. The heart of stone was broken, was melted: repenting of sin, they forsook it; and, hearing the Gospel, believed it."

"Mr. Moffat," remarks the same penetrating writer, "eminently possesses the poet's eye; he sees everything through the medium of the imagination, and Genius stands by ready to robe his perceptions in the most beautiful attire. The sovereignty of his spirit is immediately confessed by his hearers; and, in spite of a very defective manner, and a most bar-

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barous elocution, made up of the worst Scottish dialect, disguised in divers African intonations, he reigns supreme in every audience, whether metropolitan or provincial." "Many yet living," it is remarked by the Editor of the *Missionary Chronicle* for the month in which that voice has been heard in England again, "remember the fascination which his speeches and addresses exercised upon all who heard them. The thrilling narratives, the tender feeling, the poetic tone, and the pleasant voice, always attracted and deeply impressed the lovers of missions." Dr. Campbell, as we have seen, alludes to the bright hues of imagination in which Mr. Moffat is apt to dip the subjects of his tongue or of his pen. It would be interesting to observe, had one the capacity, how this attribute of genius manifests itself in the translation of such books as the Psalms, Ruth, Esther, and Isaiah, into the speech of a people by turns pastoral and warlike as those who use the Sechuana language; and it would be particularly pleasant to examine, under this point of view, the volume of Hymns in Sechuana, which, at the suggestion of the Rev. Richard Miles, Mr. Moffat composed, printed, and put into use, in place of those Dutch compositions to which, in public worship, he and his people had been confined. It is one more of his many titles to grateful remembrance that he wrote the first hymn ever penned in the native language, and, in fact, became the Poet of the Bechuana Sanctuary.

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The difficulties of mastering the Sechuana are increased by the variety of its dialects, and their difference from the language of the nation generally. In the towns, its purity and its harmony are preserved by means of their "pitchos," or public meetings, at which it is best spoken, and of their festivals and ceremonials, as well as of their songs and their social intercourse.

"But with the isolated villages of the desert," as Mr. Moffat remarks, in a passage to which Professor Max Muller refers in his "Lectures on Language," "it is far otherwise. They have no such meetings, no festivals, no cattle, nor any kind of manufactures, to keep their energies alive; riches they have none, their sole care being to keep body and soul together. To accomplish this, is with them their 'chief end.' They are compelled to traverse the wilds often to a great distance from their native village. On such occasions, fathers and mothers, and all who can bear a burden, often set out for weeks at a time, and leave their children to the care of two or more infirm old people. The infant progeny, some of whom are beginning to lisp, while others can just master a whole sentence, and those still farther advanced, romping and playing together through the live-long day, the children of nature, become habituated to a language of their own. The more voluble condescend to the less precocious, and thus, from this infant Babel, proceeds a dialect composed of a host of mongrel words and phrases joined together

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without rule; and in the course of a generation the entire character of the language is changed."

These people are as inquisitive as the Athenians, and as conversational as the Gauls. We are apt to conceive of the Bechuanas who speak Sechuana as of one tribe; but, in fact, they are legion. At least, when Mr. Moffat wrote the book from which we glean our best and largest information, he had not yet been able to learn either their number or their extent. Not that he ever found himself wholly destitute of native aid. "I never knew," he says, "a man that had not a name; and I have sat and been taught by many infant lips to count more than ten, even when no missionary had laboured among them. It must be to a resident, not a mere *swallow* visitor, that we look with confidence for correct information on subjects abstract in their nature." Accordingly, the mere interpreter rarely proved a safe conductor. A traveller, for example, asked a professed guide the name of the last halting-place; his answer was, "Ua reng," which the inquirer was proceeding to enter into his note-book, till apprised that it merely meant "What d'ye say?"

One of the keys to Sechuana is, as with languages in general, a correspondence, either evident or imaginary, between the name and the thing. Helped by his blunders almost as much as by his more fortunate attempts, Mr. Moffat stumbled his way into a mastery of the tongue. But, like a man whose crutches

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have failed him, he had to fling aside interpreters, who, he often found, could neither understand themselves nor make others understand. "A missionary who commences giving *direct* instruction to the natives, though far from competent in the language, is proceeding on safer ground than if he were employing an interpreter who is not proficient in both languages, and has not a tolerable understanding of the doctrines of the Gospel." As in the days of Job, and in the land of Uz, "an interpreter," to any good purpose, was barely "one among a thousand." "The salvation of the soul," said Mr. Moffat, "is a great and important *subject*." "The salvation of the soul," said the interpreter, "is a very great *sack!*" He richly deserved "the *sack*," it must be confessed, if he did not get it. Not merely the language, but the literature of the Sechuana, such as it is, merits study, if it abounds with phrases so short, sharp, and decisive as one in Moshume's call to battle, "Let your axes be as *sharp as hunger!*"

Notwithstanding their many discouragements, the mission-party perseveringly went on with the work. They had to build their own dwellings, to enclose their gardens and folds, to form water-furrows to irrigate the parched sandy soil, and to raise grain and vegetables, great portions of which the natives reaped. Standing in the saw-pit, labouring at the anvil, treading clay for making bricks, preaching to the motley few who attended their temporary place

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of worship—such were the duties of each recurring day. And when they met in the evenings, they had frequently to tell each other of losses sustained, of tools and utensils stolen, but never of any gains, save those of patience and faith in their Master's work. More than once on returning from preaching, they found a stone left in the pot instead of the meat on which they had hoped to dine. Indeed, there was no end to the losses, mortifications, and disappointments they daily met with.

To add to their trials, the country suffered from a severe drought; the heavens were as brass, the land was barren, cattle were dying rapidly, and many of the people, emaciated almost to skeletons, were living on roots and reptiles. The "rain-makers" were consulted, and being puzzled to find any more plausible reason for the absence of rain, attributed it to the prayers of the missionaries and the bell of the mission chapel, which they said frightened the clouds. At last the missionaries were informed that they must leave the country, and that measures of a violent nature would be resorted to if they disobeyed. The chief who conveyed this message stood at their cottage door, spear in hand, in presence of Mrs. Moffat, who was watching the crisis, for such it was.

Mild though he was, however, Moffat was in courage and nerve a match for the sternest and the bravest of them. Before the deputed chief and his twelve attendants he presented himself

as fearlessly as David before Goliath and the Philistines—weak like him, yet, like him, strong in the Divine power on which he threw himself and his cause. There, too, stood his intrepid wife, an infant in her arms. With a steadfast gaze the tall missionary looked the spear-bearing chief straight in the eyes, and thus, or to this effect, calmly and slowly replied: "We were unwilling to leave you. We are now resolved to stay at our post. As for your threats, we pity you; for you know not what you do. We have suffered, it is true; and the Master whom we serve has said, in His word, 'When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another.' But though we have suffered, we do not consider that what has been done to us amounts to persecution. It is no more than we are prepared to expect from those who know no better. If resolved to get rid of us, you must take stronger measures to succeed, for our hearts are with you. You may shed my blood, or you may burn our dwelling; but I know that you will not touch my wife and children; and you will surely reverence the grey head of my venerable friend (pointing to Mr. Hamilton).* As for me, my decision is made. I do not leave your country." Then, throwing open his waistcoat, he stood erect and fearless. "Now, then," he proceeded, "if you will, drive your spears to my heart; and, when you have slain me, my com-

* Mr. Moffat modestly styles Mr. Hamilton "Father of the Bechuana Mission."

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panions will know that the hour is come for them to depart." "These men," said the chief, turning to his attendants, "must have ten lives. When they are so fearless of death, there must be something in immortality."

This was the last menace made, and, from that time, the way to the hearts of the people seemed to be opened up. The experiences of Mr. Moffat, however, very much resemble those of the first Apostle to the Gentiles. His perils and his trials were both frequent and various. Sometimes he passed the night in a bed of sand; at one time he was at the point of death from drinking poisoned water; and more than once he was confronted with lions, tigers, and serpents, or was face to face with men more savage, more bloodthirsty, and more treacherous than they. One example will suffice to show the dangers to which, in this respect, he was continually exposed. "In one of my early journeys," he says, "I had a providential escape from an African tiger and a serpent. I had left the waggons, and wandered to a distance among the coppice and grassy openings in quest of game. I had a small double-barrelled gun on my shoulder, which was loaded with a ball and small shot; an antelope passed, at which I fired, and slowly followed the course it took. After advancing a short distance, I saw a tiger-cat staring at me between the forked branches of a tree, behind which his long spotted body was concealed, twisting and turning his tail

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like a cat just going to spring on its prey. This I knew was a critical moment, not having a shot of ball in my gun. I moved about as if in search of something on the grass, taking care to retreat at the same time. After getting, as I thought, a suitable distance to turn my back, I moved somewhat more quickly, but in my anxiety to escape what was behind, I did not see what was before, until startled by treading on a large cobra de capello serpent, asleep on the grass. It instantly twirled its body round my leg, on which I had nothing but a thin pair of trousers, when I leaped from the spot, dragging the venomous and enraged reptile after me; and while in the act of throwing itself into a position to bite, without turning round, I threw my piece over my shoulder, and shot it. Taking it by the tail, I brought it to my people at the waggons, who, on examining the bags of poison, asserted, that had the creature bitten me, I could never have reached the waggons. The serpent was six feet long."

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CHAPTER V.

THE KURUMAN.

Invasion of the Mantatees—Defeated by the Griquas—Removal of the Mission Station—The Kuruman Fountain—Visit to the Bauangketsi—Welcome by the King—The Doctrine of the Resurrection—Alarms at the Kuruman in Mr. Moffat's absence—His safe return—First Native Christian Church—Death of a Christian Female—Visit of Rev. J. J. Freeman—His description of the Mission Station.

WHILE prospects were thus nearly heart-breaking and forlorn, an event took place which led to results most favourable to the Mission. Rumours came from all sides of the advance from the interior of an invincible army, numerous as the locusts, carrying destruction and ruin wherever they went. Mr. Moffat journeyed to the northward with the double object of ascertaining the cause of these rumours and of forming acquaintance with the neighbouring tribes. He had not proceeded far when he ascertained that the invading force was near at hand; that they were known as Mantatees, a section of the Basuto race, who, being driven from their own country by the Zulus, had fallen back upon weaker tribes, and, gathering strength with

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each successive victory, were now advancing upon Lithakoo. Mr. Moffat at once retraced his steps, apprised the Bechuanas of the impending danger, and, apprehending that from their weakness and cowardice they would easily fall a prey to the enemy, determined to go on to Griqua Town and call upon the friends there for assistance. This bold but judicious action saved the chief and people, who a little while before had sought to drive away him who was now their deliverer. The Griquas formed a strong commando, and joining with the Bechuanas advanced against the invading army, whom they met and put to flight.

The scenes through which at this time the missionary had to pass were heart-rending. "Seeing the savage ferocity of the Bechuanas (in a state of war), in killing inoffensive women and children for the sake of a few paltry rings, or of being able to boast that they had slain some of the Mantatees, I turned my attention to some of those objects of pity fleeing in all directions. By my galloping in among them, many of the Bechuanas were deterred from their barbarous purpose. It was distressing to see mothers and infants rolled in blood, and the living baby in the arms of a dead mother. All ages and both sexes lay prostrate on the ground. Shortly after the Mantatees began to retreat, their women, on seeing that mercy was shown them, instead of fleeing, generally sat down, and, baring their bosoms, exclaimed, 'I am a woman! I am a woman!'"

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The circumstances attending this event made a most marked impression upon the Chief Mothibi and his people in favour of the missionaries, whose self-sacrificing conduct they now gratefully acknowledged. Advantage was taken of this state of things to obtain a new site for the Mission—the place which they occupied being in many respects unsuitable—and the present village of Kuruman was selected for the purpose. Again the hands of the missionaries were fully employed in laying out the new station, in itinerating among the natives, and in translating the Catechism, Hymns, and Simple Lessons into the Sechuana language.

The Kuruman Fountain issues "full and flowing" from caverns in a little hill, composed of blue and grey limestone, mixed with flint. Its noble stream, though pure and wholesome, is rather calcareous. Its source must be at a great distance; for the rains falling on the hills and plains forty miles round, in any one year, could not supply such a stream even for a month. Fountains, indeed, are, throughout the whole limestone basin, precarious; nor does even the Kuruman continue to send forth the torrents it once afforded; and the river, like many others in Africa, largest at its source, is, partly by evaporation in the air and partly by absorption in the soil, completely lost about ten miles to the north-west.

Shortly after the removal to the Kuruman, Mr. Moffat fulfilled a promise he had made to visit

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Makaba, king of the Bauangketsi. The chief received him most favourably, and in answer to Moffat's offer to send a missionary to labour among his people, he replied that he hoped in future no grass would be allowed to grow in the road between the Kuruman and his country. But the ideas of the chieftain with regard to the benefit to be derived from the presence of a missionary were very vague, and he resolutely refrained from conversing on religious subjects.

At length Mr. Moffat resolved to pay him a formal visit for this purpose. Arrived in the presence of the great man, illustrious for war and conquest, amidst nobles and counsellors, the missionary stated that his object was to tell him news. The chief's countenance lighted up at the thought of hearing about feats of war and other subjects, congenial to his savage disposition. But when he found that the topics had solely reference to the Great Being of whom he had before said he knew nothing, he resumed his knife and jackal's skin, and commenced humming a native air. One of his men, however, appeared struck with the character of the Redeemer, and particularly with His miracles. On hearing that Christ had raised the dead, he exclaimed, "What an excellent doctor He must have been, to make dead men live!" This led to a description of His power, and how that power would be exercised at the last day in raising the dead. In the course of these remarks, the ear of the monarch

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first caught the startling sound of a Resurrection. "What!" he exclaimed, with astonishment, "what are these words about? the dead, shall they arise!" "Yes," was the reply, "all the dead shall arise." Will my father arise?" "Yes, your father will arise." "Will all the slain in battle arise?" "Yes." "And will all that have been killed and devoured by lions, tigers, hyenas, and crocodiles, again revive?" "Yes; and come to judgment." "And will those whose bodies have been left to waste and wither on the desert plains, and be scattered to the winds, again arise?" he asked, with a kind of triumph. "Yes," was the reply; "not one will be left behind." After looking at the missionary for a few moments, he turned to his people, with a stentorian voice: "Hark, ye wise men, whoever is among you, the wisest of past generations, did ever your ears hear such strange and unheard of news?" Then, addressing himself to Moffat, "Father, I love you much," he said. "Your visit and your presence have made my heart white as milk. The words of your mouth are sweet as honey, but the words of a resurrection are too great to be heard. I do not wish to hear again about the dead rising. The dead cannot arise! The dead must not arise!" "Why," was the enquiry, "can so great a man refuse knowledge, and turn away from wisdom? Why must not one 'add to words,' and speak of a resurrection?" Raising and uncovering his arm, which had been strong in battle, and shaking his hand as if quivering a spear,

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the chieftain answered, "I have slain my thousands, and shall they arise?" Never before had the light of Divine revelation dawned upon his savage mind, nor his conscience accused him for one of the thousand deeds of rapine and murder which had marked his course through a long career.

On his return from visiting Makaba, Moffat again nearly fell into the hands of the hostile Mantatees, as they surged onward in their devastating course among the tribes of the interior. During this time, Mrs. Moffat, left alone at the station, was exposed to suspense the most keen and distressing.

All had been tranquil when Mr. Moffat left, and Mr. Hamilton had proceeded with three Hottentots to the new station, to make preparations for a final removal. Mrs. Moffat was thus left alone on the old station in one house, and a young Hottentot woman in another. About this period, a party of marauders from the Orange River collected in the Long Mountains, some forty miles to the west of the station, attacked several villages along the Kuruman River, and were contemplating a junction with others in order to attack the Batlapis and the mission premises. This created considerable uneasiness; but as reports of that kind were often dubious, Mrs. Moffat still remained, though not without some alarm. She knew their desperate character, and feared that they might be tempted to attack the mission-house for the sake of ammunition which might be there. One evening the Hottentot girl came in wringing

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her hands, and in great distress stated that Bakari, or Mantatees, had been at Nokaneng, and were on their way to the Kuruman. This was alarming intelligence to one who, with two babes, had only two little Bushmen children with her in the house, and no means of escape but fleeing to the bushes. A message was sent to Mothibi, who said that the news of the approach of such an enemy was correct, but that he thought there was no very great danger before next morning. Again commending herself and her little ones to the care of Divine Providence, Mrs. Moffat lay down in confidence, and fell asleep.

But at midnight a loud rapping at the door awoke her. From the previous reports she was at a loss to think whether it might be Jacob Cloete, the Griqua marauder, or the announcement of the near approach of the horde from the interior. On asking who was at the door, Mothibi replied that it was he. When it was opened, he entered with as many men as the house could hold, and announced the dreaded intelligence that the Mantatees were approaching. The sound of alarm and uproar was raised in every part of the town. A light being obtained, Mrs. Moffat seated herself in the midst of the noisy council, heard all they had to communicate, and wrote to Mr. Hamilton. There was now universal confusion till day dawned, which had the usual effect of raising the spirits of the Bechuanas. Mr. Hamilton and the people arrived at eight o'clock, when preparations were made for a

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hasty flight. Warriors were assembling, and thousands were engaged in secreting some articles of their property, and in packing up others. Each succeeding messenger brought fresh alarms. But about noon it was ascertained that the dreaded enemy had directed their course away from the Kuruman.

This joyful news immediately dispelled the gloomy cloud, and filled every heart with gladness; but the intelligence which made the populace give their fears to the wind, produced in Mrs. Moffat a shock of horror, as the conviction instantly flashed across her mind, that nothing less than a Divine interposition could save her husband from destruction, it being the time that he was expected to be on his return. She stated her fears, and all saw the danger and sympathized; but no one could be induced to go in search. The idea of falling in with such a horde of savages was horrible in the extreme; and for three weeks the missionary's wife was exposed to a state of mental agony more easily conceived than described. Nothing but incessant approaches to the throne of God supported her in this time of trial. During that period continual reports were brought that Moffat had been cut off. One had seen a piece of the waggon; another had found a part of his saddle; and some had picked up portions of his linen, stained with blood. At last a few men were prevailed on to go and ascertain the facts, and they started on the morning of the very day on which Moffat made his appearance. Thus, though there

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had been abundant cause for alarm and for the exercise of faith and prayer, through the merciful providence of God, their fears were turned to praise.

Not until the year 1828 did the missionaries see any fruit of their teachings. Then they were at length rewarded for their enduring perseverance. Aid in the erection of a church and school-house was voluntarily and cheerfully given. Improvements in the social habits of the people followed. Their greasy skins were covered with decent raiment. Those who attended public worship behaved with great decorum. They became familiarized with several of the arts of civilized life. Some who had years before gazed in wonder at the "walking house" (the waggon) of the missionary, now acquired the knowledge how to construct one. Standing around the forge while Moffat with brawny arm was blowing the bellows or wielding the hammer, his long black beard tied in a knot at the back of his neck to escape the sparks which flew from the red-hot iron on the anvil, they learned something of the dignity of labour. And gathered at the doorway of the room where a printing-press had been erected, they gazed with interesting amazement at the process by which sheets of white paper, after disappearing for a moment, with something of a sleight-of-hand movement, emerged spangled with letters—conveying to them, in their own language, that Word of God which had prompted their teachers from very love to visit

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them. Altogether, the position of the Mission was such as to excite most pleasurable emotions in the hearts of those who now realized, in some degree, that their strength had not been spent in vain.

The formation of the first native church in Kuruman is one of the many acts by which the name of Moffat has acquired an enviable immortality. In the presence of native strangers from all parts, the whole of the first service was conducted in the language of the country. Hymns and prayers, lessons and sermon, were all in Sechuana: the preparatory examination of the candidates for membership being so as a matter of course. Rachel, the wife of Aaron, it is true, was questioned in Dutch, that being the tongue in which she was conversant; but all the rest were pure Bechuana. As a church, they just equalled in number the full college of the Apostles; and, in the evening of the day, they sat down together at the supper-table of the Lord, using for the purpose the handsome vessels which had been received from Mrs. Greaves, of Sheffield, and which had arrived at the very juncture of necessity, after being a twelvemonth upon the road.

The first death of a Mochuana Christian (Mochuana being the singular of which Bechuana is the plural) forms a fit pendant to this first celebration of the Saviour's passion in her native land. A godly woman was dying of *kuatsi*, a disease incident to cattle, but communicable to human beings through eating the flesh of animals infected

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with it. Calling together her husband and their friends, she said, "Behold, I am going to die." Some started, others wept. "Weep not," she said, "because I am about to leave you, but weep for your own sins and your own souls. With me all is well. Do not suppose that I die like a beast, to sleep for ever in the grave. No; Jesus has died for my sins: He has promised to save me, and I am going to be with Him."

The Rev. J. J. Freeman, who visited Africa in 1849, was so struck with the appearance of the Bechuana women as indicative of sober-minded intelligence, that he urged upon them, through an interpreter, the importance of "using their influence as mothers in a right direction," in order to the formation of an improved national character; and they assured him, in return, that they felt the responsibility which rested upon them, and "habitually prayed that God would help them."

Mr. Arbousset also noticed the manifest superiority of the Bechuana women over their sisters of the tribe styled "Bastaard." While the latter, he remarks, seemed to stick to their seats, as if (quoting Montesquieu's "Persian Letters") "nobility were to be acquired upon chairs," the former were active and laborious, doing the whole work of the house, as well as taking charge of the children, and even adding to engagements indoors some part in the cultivation of the soil. What the English visitor now saw, however, was in great contrast with the

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trying experiences through which, as a woman, Mrs. Moffat had to pass in earlier intercourse with her own sex. Once, for example, with a babe in her arms, she humbly asked a native woman to leave the kitchen that she might close it before going to public worship. The intruder seized a piece of wood to hurl it at her head, and was wisely left in undisputed possession of the room. Stones were often seized in like manner, and the poor lady utterly defied. Even in chapel, with the noblest ladies at her side, Mrs. Moffat had to endure the sight of their hunting for vermin on their own persons during sermon.

On arriving at Kuruman, Mr. Freeman received a cordial welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Moffat, who had then but one member of their family with them. This was their daughter, afterwards married to Mr. Fredoux, of the Paris Missionary Society; and who, now, as a mourning widow, has accompanied her aged parents to England. Through Mr. Freeman's eyes we are able to view the pretty village founded by Robert Moffat. It wears a very pleasing appearance. The mission premises, with the walled gardens opposite, form a street wide and long. The chapel is a substantial and well-looking building of stone. By the side of it stands Mr. Moffat's house, the promising look of which made Mr. Freeman wish that every missionary had one like it—simple yet commodious. In a cottage hard by, the venerable Hamilton was

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passing his declining days, extremely feeble, but solaced by the motherly care of his colleague's wife. The gardens were well stocked with fruit and vegetables, requiring much water, but easily getting it from the "fountain." The chapel was begun in 1830 by Millen, the mason, in his spare hours; but, from the difficulty of procuring timber, was not quite finished till 1839. On the Sunday morning the chapel bell rang for early service. Breakfasting at seven, all were ready for the schools at half-past eight. The infants were taught by Miss Moffat in their school-house; more advanced classes were grouped in the open air, or collected in the adjacent buildings. Before ten the work of separate teaching ceased, and young and old assembled for public worship. A sanctuary, spacious and lofty, and airy withal, was comfortably filled with men, women, and children, for the most part decently dressed.

In company with Mr. Freeman, we witness one of the episodes familiar in missionary life. Within the chapel sat a man, stout, elderly, and bright-looking, who had come from two hundred miles east of the Lekatlong, to acquaint Mr. Moffat with the difficulties in which the people of his district were placed. The Dutch Boers, beginning by demanding the orphans among them, finished with seizing the children of living parents. The fathers resisted, the assailants fired, the defenders fell, and the kidnapped boys and girls were carried off. This, no doubt, was but a sample of atrocities still persisted in, and

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always with impunity; yet be it hoped that the feeling visitor took a too despondent view of the matter, when, in the tale of the mournful messenger to Kuruman, he seemed to see "annihilation steadily advancing."

Sunday passed in a succession of services similar to those of the morning; Monday came, and Mr. Freeman saw Mr. Moffat's printing-office and bindery. These establishments were as orderly, if not as complete, as if they had been in the purlieus of Paternoster Row, although till that time the whole burden of them had rested upon one pair of shoulders. But, for the then future, Mr. Ashton was to come to the busy man's relief, that Moffat himself might be at more leisure for the momentous labours of translation and revision. It may be well conceived that he derived both assistance and encouragement from a visitor so experienced as Mr. Freeman, who took with him to Blomfield Street a strong impression of the value of the Station as on the high road to the Interior, and as a union and centre of influence to all around.

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CHAPTER VI.

MOSELEKATZE AND THE MATABELE.

Matabele Embassage to Kuruman—Reception of the Ambassadors by the Missionaries—Evil Designs of the Bechuanas—Return of the Ambassadors, convoyed by Mr. Moffat—Devastation caused by the Matabele—Reception of Mr. Moffat by Moselekatze—Kindly feeling of the Chief toward the Missionary—Interest excited in Cape Colony by Mr. Moffat's visit to Moselekatze—Exploring Expedition under Dr. Andrew Smith—Mr. Moffat accompanies it—Moselekatze consents to receive Missionaries—American Mission to the Matabele—Its Disastrous Termination.

THE good influence exerted by Robert Moffat and his coadjutors at Kuruman was not confined to the people immediately around them. Native newsmongers communicated to the more interior tribes something of the character of the Christian teachers. Their kindness and purity of heart, their wonderful skill, their unflinching courage and noble bearing, were extolled, according to native phraseology, in what may have been extravagant terms, conveying to the savage mind the idea that they were something more than ordinary men.

Intelligence of this sort reached the Matabele king, Umsilegas, or Moselekatze, as he has been

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generally named, then occupying the country now known as the Transvaal Republic—a very Napoleon among the aborigines, who numbered his warriors by thousands, and was cruelly despotic, owning no law but his own capricious will. He was curious to know something more of the white men, whose fame had reached him; and towards the close of 1829, dispatched two of his trusted councillors, "Intunas," to visit Kuruman, and make themselves acquainted with the manners and instructions of the teachers.

These ambassadors were kindly received by the missionaries, who showed them marked attention, exhibiting to them everything that was calculated to interest, and especially endeavouring to explain and impress upon them the simple truths of the Gospel. The men were savages, pure and simple, but a natural politeness and dignity in their deportment showed that they were persons of influence and authority amongst their own people, although they maintained entire silence on the subject.

The houses, the walls of the folds and gardens, the water ditch conveying a large stream out of the bed of the river, and the smith's forge, especially filled them with admiration and astonishment, which they expressed, not in the wild gestures generally made, but by the utmost gravity, as well as the most respectful demeanour. "You are men, we are but children," said they; "Moselekatze must be taught all these things."

When standing in the hall of the missionary's

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house, looking at the strange furniture of a civilized abode, one of them caught sight of a small looking-glass, on which he gazed with admiration. Mrs. Moffat handed him one which was much larger; he looked intensely at his reflected countenance, and never having seen such a thing before, supposed it was that of one of his attendants on the other side. Abruptly putting his hand behind it, he bade him to begone; but looking again at the same face, he cautiously turned it. Seeing nothing, he returned the glass with great gravity to Mrs. Moffat, saying, that he could not trust it.

Nothing, however, appeared to strike them so forcibly as the public worship in the chapel. They saw men like themselves meeting together with great decorum, mothers hushing their babes, or hastily retiring if they made any noise, and the elder children sitting perfectly silent. When the missionary ascended the pulpit, they listened to the hymn sung; and though, from their ignorance of the Sechuana language, they could not understand all that was said, they were convinced that something very serious was the subject of the address. The order and fervour which pervaded all parts of the service bewildered their minds; for, from their infancy, they had been accustomed only to public meetings introduced and characterized by the hoarse war-song, and by displays of chivalry. They were exceedingly inquisitive in this matter, and were much surprised to find that the hymns sung were

not war-songs expressive of the wild reveries which the associations of music alone brought to their minds.

When the time for their departure arrived, rumours were current that some of the Sechuana tribes through which they had to pass on their way homeward, were meditating their destruction. This caused great uneasiness to the minds of the missionaries, who, taking into consideration the reported warlike character and overwhelming force of the Matabele, trembled at the possible consequences of the ambassadors of such a power being butchered on their road home.

After much deliberation, Moffat himself resolved to convoy them through the several tribes from whom danger was apprehended. The task was one attended with considerable risk—there were perils from wild beasts and wild men to be encountered on the many hundred miles of desert country to be traversed. But the Providence which directed Moffat's steps on this remarkable journey preserved him from the one, and, with the influence of his own good name, secured for him, from the other, kindness and welcome.

Occasionally some of the solitary inhabitants, who subsisted entirely on roots and the chase, would intercept the travellers, and beg a little tobacco, and sometimes pass the night where they encamped. These were the companions of the lion, and seemed perfectly versed in all his tactics. On retiring to

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rest one night, a lion passed near the party, occasionally giving a roar, which softly died away on the extended plain as it was responded to by another at a distance. Directing the attention of these Balala to the sound, Moffat asked if they thought there was danger. They turned their ears as to a voice with which they were familiar, and, after listening for a moment or two, replied, "There is no danger; he has eaten, and is going to sleep." They were right, and the travellers slept also. Being asked in the morning how they knew the lions were going to sleep, they replied, "We live with them; they are our companions."

Having accompanied his charge to near the borders of their own territory, from whence they could proceed without danger, Moffat desired to leave them, and return to his work at Kuruman. The strangers, however, pleaded with him that as he had shown them so much friendship, he must go and experience that of their king, who, they declared, would kill them if they suffered their guardian to return without having seen him. "Yonder," said one of them, pointing to the blue mountains on the distant horizon, "dwells the great Moselekatze, and how shall we approach his presence if you are not with us? If you love us still, save us; for when we shall have told our news, he will ask why our conduct gave you pain to cause your return; and before the sun descends on the day we see his face, we shall be ordered out for execution because you are

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not. Look at me and my companion, and tell us, if you can, that you will not go. For we had better die here than in the sight of our people."

This appeal overruled all Moffat's objections, and he resolved to accompany them to their king. The country they were travelling through far surpassed that which they had left. Wooded mountains and richly verdant valleys, with delicious rills of running water, charmed the eye, reminding the missionary of his own native hills and dales. But the ruins of villages—dilapidated walls, heaps of stones and rubbish, mingled with human skulls—told a ghastly tale. They were evidences that at a time not long passed away, thousands of people—the Bakones and Baretze—had occupied these luxuriant glens, which the extirpating invasions of the Matabele had left inhabited only by game and beasts of prey.

It was evident also that his companions were anxious to keep the missionary in the dark about the devastations which everywhere met the eye; and they always endeavoured to be present when he came in contact with the aborigines of the country. But as Moffat could speak the language, opportunities were not long wanting. One of the three servants who accompanied the two ambassadors to the Kuruman, had been a captive among the band of Mantatees which had been defeated at Old Lithakoo. He was a native of the regions through which they were now passing, and would sometimes whisper of the events connected with the desolations of his

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fatherland. These nations he described as being once numerous as the locusts, rich in cattle, and as trading to a great extent with the distant tribes of the north. With his fellow Bakones, he had witnessed the desolation of many of the towns around—the sweeping away of the cattle and valuables, the butchering of the inhabitants, and the devastating career of flames and smoke. Commandos of Chaka, the once bloody monarch of the Zoolus, had made frightful havoc; but all these were nothing to the final overthrow of the Bakone tribes by the arms of Moselekatze. The former inhabitants of these luxuriant hills and fertile plains had, through peace and plenty, become effeminate; while the Matabele, hardened under the barbarous reign of the monster Chaka, from whose iron grasp they had made their escape, like an overwhelming torrent rushed onward to the north, marking their course with blood and carnage.

One Sabbath morning the missionary ascended a hill to gain a view of the surrounding country. He had scarcely reached the summit and sat down, when his Bakone companion appeared, having stolen away from the party, to answer some questions asked the day before, to which he could not then reply, because of the presence of his superiors. Seeing before him a large extent of level ground covered with ruins, Moffat inquired what had become of the inhabitants.

The man had just sat down, but he immediately arose, and stretching forth his arm in the direction of

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the ruins, said, "I, even I, beheld it!" He paused a moment, as if in thought, and then continued, "There lived the great chief of multitudes. He reigned among them like a king. He was the chief of the blue-coloured cattle. They were numerous as the dense mist on the mountain brow; his flocks covered the plain. He thought the number of his warriors would awe his enemies. His people boasted in their spears, and laughed at the cowardice of such as had fled from their towns. 'I shall slay them, and hang up their shields on my hill. Our race is a race of warriors. Who ever subdued our fathers? they were mighty in combat. We still possess the spoils of ancient times. Have not our dogs eaten the shields of their nobles? The vultures shall devour the slain of our enemies.' Thus they sang and thus they danced, till they beheld on yonder heights the approaching foe. The noise of their song was hushed in night, and their hearts were filled with dismay. They saw the clouds ascend from the plains. It was the smoke of burning towns. The confusion of a whirlwind was in the heart of the great chief of the blue-coloured cattle. This shout was raised, 'They are friends;' but they shouted again, 'They are foes,' till their near approach proclaimed them Matabele. The men seized their arms, and rushed out as if to chase the antelope. The onset was as the voice of lightning, and their spears as the shaking of a forest in the autumn storm. The Matabele lions raised the shout of death, and flew

upon their victims. It was the shout of victory. Their hissing and hollow groans told their progress among the dead. A few moments laid hundreds on the ground. The clash of shields was the signal of triumph. Our people fled with their cattle to the top of yonder mount. The Matabele entered the town with the roar of the lion; they pillaged and fired the houses, speared the mothers, and cast their infants to the flames. The sun went down. The victors emerged from the smoking plain, and pursued their course, surrounding the base of yonder hill. They slaughtered cattle, they danced and sang till the dawn of day, they ascended and killed till their hands were weary of the spear." Then stooping to the ground on which he stood, the narrator took up a little dust in his hand; blowing it off, and holding out his naked palm, he added, "That is all that remains of the great chief of the blue-coloured cattle!" Mr. Moffat found from other aborigines that this outburst of native poetic eloquence was no fabled song, but merely a compendious sketch of the fearful catastrophe which had overwhelmed those unhappy tribes.

Upon reaching one of the cattle outposts of Moselekatze's dominions, the deference paid to the "Intunas" whom Moffat accompanied, showed that they were men of distinction; and at every village they passed, as they approached the great chief's residence, they were received by increasing demonstrations of pleasure. Messengers had gone before

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to announce their approach to the king, and no sooner had they arrived than he was prepared to receive them.

The place of reception was a large cattle-fold, capable of holding ten thousand head of cattle. It was lined by a thousand warriors, wearing kilts of ape-skins, their legs and arms adorned with the hair and tails of oxen, and their heads with feathers. Behind their shields, which reached to their chins, they stood motionless as statues—their glistening eyes and white teeth only animate. After some minutes of profound silence they commenced a war song; when, from behind the lines, out marched Moselekatze, followed by a number of men bearing baskets and bowls of food, which were placed at the missionary's feet.

The barbarian monarch, whose prostrate vassals addressed him as the "Great Elephant," "Lion's Paw," "God of Cattle and Men," and other extravagant titles, was a dark, tonsure-headed, broad-faced, rather corpulent man of goodly stature, who could be capriciously cheerful and good-natured, or cruel and despotic by turns. He shook hands with Moffat, and invited him to partake of entertainment.

By this time Moffat's waggons were seen in the distance, and having intimated his wish to be directed to a place where he might encamp in the outskirts of the town, the chief accompanied him, keeping fast hold of his right arm, with perfect familiarity. "The land is before you," said he;

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"you are come to your son. You must sleep where you please." When the "moving houses," as the waggons were called, drew near, he took a firmer grasp of the missionary's arm, looking on them with unutterable surprise; and the man who was the terror of thousands drew back with fear, in doubt as to whether they were not living creatures. When the oxen were unyoked, he approached the waggon with the utmost caution, still holding Moffat by one hand, and placing the other on his mouth, indicating his surprise. He looked at them very intently, particularly the wheels; and when told of how many pieces of wood each wheel was composed, his wonder was increased. After examining all very closely, one mystery yet remained—how the large band of iron surrounding the felloes of the wheel came to be in one piece, without either end or joint. Umbate, Moffat's friend and fellow-traveller, whose visit to the Kuruman station had made him much wiser than his master, took hold of the missionary's right hand, and related what he had seen. "My eyes," he said, "saw that very hand," pointing to Moffat's, "cut these bars of iron, take a piece off one end, and then join them as you now see them." A minute inspection ensued to discover the welded part. "Does he give medicine to the iron?" was the monarch's inquiry. "No," said Umbate, "nothing is used but fire, a hammer, and a chisel."

The chief seemed very anxious to exhibit himself and his nation to the best advantage, and assembled

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warriors from his various villages, to the number of ten thousand, to display his martial glory in a war dance and sham fight. He was rather surprised that such an exhibition did not astonish and delight the missionary, and wondered still more when he was told by him that it was sinful to carry on unprovoked war, and kill men as he was in the habit of doing; that there was an invisible God who frowned on the perpetrators of such cruelties, and destroyed their power; and that unless he restrained himself and his people from causing bloodshed, his might would be broken and the bones of his warriors be mingled with those which they had themselves scattered over the desolate plains around.

Bold words these to be uttered in the face of a sovereign whose first court requirement was that the sound of his own praise and glory should never be out of his ears; whose word was law, and whose uplifted finger made his greatest nobles tremble. But Moffat was one who never feared the face of any man, and he did not flinch from upholding the standard of Christianity even in the very stronghold of Paganism.

During the ten days over which his stay with Moselekatze extended, the missionary obtained a great deal of information respecting the Matabele, their manners and their customs; and heathenism never appeared to him more repulsive than in the ferocious, horrid, and cruel practices which he heard of, and sometimes witnessed, among them. He

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endeavoured to convey to the mind of the monarch some ideas of the blessings of peace, the fruitful effects of industry, and the comforting hope of Christianity; and these lessons were at times received with apparently great interest and attention, although generally the movements of his warriors, or droves of sleek cattle, possessed charms to him infinitely more attractive than the "news" of the missionary.

On the whole, however, Moselekatze took kindly to Moffat, and, barbarian though he was, showed that he was capable of feeling and manifesting gratitude, which is said to be a rare virtue among his race. Placing his hand on the missionary's shoulder one day, he addressed him by the title of "Father," saying, "You have made my heart as white as milk. I cease not to wonder at the love of a stranger. You never saw me before, but you love me more than my own people. You fed me when I was hungry, you clothed me when I was naked, you carried me in your bosom, and your arm shielded me from my enemies." On Moffat's replying that he was unconscious of having done him any such service, the king pointed to the two ambassadors who were standing by, saying, "These are great men. Umbate is my right hand. When I sent them from my presence to see the land of the white man, I sent my ears, my eyes, my mouth. What they heard, I heard; what they saw, I saw; and when they spoke, it was Moselekatze who spoke. You fed them

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and clothed them; and when they were to be slain, you were their shield. You did it unto me. You did it unto Moselekatze, the son of Machobane!"

To the untutored mind of the savage chieftain, the generous conduct of the missionary came as a new revelation. Himself an Ishmael of the Ishmaelites, constantly at war with the neighbouring tribes, he was unacquainted with acts of mercy or deeds of kindness. And now there dawned upon his darkened soul a sense of self-sacrificing and disinterested action, such as he had never experienced before. Admiration, and something of a friendly affection for his visitor, was implanted in his savage heart; an admiration and affection which lasted a lifetime, and proved of incalculable advantage to the interests of Christianity and civilization in their after intercourse.

At this time, the main part of what is now known as South Central Africa was a *terra incognita*. Beyond the twenty-sixth degree of south latitude, no white man had yet penetrated. Early in the century two English gentlemen, Dr. Cowan and Capt. Donovan, had passed beyond Kuruman, with the object of reaching the Portuguese possessions on the East Coast; but for years they had never been heard of, and it was supposed that they had been murdered by the native tribes; although it has since been pretty well ascertained that they died of fever near the Limpopo River. Moffat's visit to Moselekatze, and the reports of some traders who had returned

from the north, excited considerable interest in Cape Town; and the members of the Literary and Scientific Society, which existed in that day, started a project for equipping an exploratory expedition into the interior, with a view to obtain a knowledge of the geography, the inhabitants, and the products of the country.

This enterprise was liberally supported by the colonial public, and in 1834 the exploring party started, under the command of Dr. Andrew Smith. On reaching Kuruman, they found Moffat prostrate from fever—the effects of overwork at translation and printing in the hot season of the year. As soon as he recovered, he readily consented to guide and accompany the expedition to Moselekatze's dominions. Dr. Smith, in his published report, gives an interesting account of the friendly reception and kind treatment which they then received from the Matabele king; and testifies that "nothing could exceed the respect shown by him for Mr. Moffat, a circumstance which was exceedingly pleasing to me, inasmuch as I knew it was most abundantly merited."

While Dr. Smith and his staff were roaming over the country, making acquaintance with its natural productions, the missionary stayed with Moselekatze; endeavouring to win him over to the acceptance of Christian teachers, pleading for the poor and oppressed, and again and again urging upon him to relax some of the stern and cruel laws under which his subjects suffered.

During this time the chief visited, in Moffat's waggon, several of his towns. Many opportunities were thus afforded of conversing with him, and obtaining extensive information concerning the character of his people, the extent and nature of his despotic sway, and the deplorable state of the aborigines, who were either oppressed by slavery, or compelled to take refuge in the haunts of lions and hyenas. When these melancholy effects of his policy were brought before Moselekatze, he would reply, that they were owing to the ignorance and disobedience of his chief men; adding, that if missionaries came to dwell with him, they would prevent these evils by teaching the people.

Before returning to Kuruman, Moffat was gratified with obtaining the king's consent to a mission being commenced among his people. This was communicated to the brethren of the American Missionary Society, Messrs. Lindley, Wilson, and Venables, who were ready to enter upon this field of labour; and in 1836 they opened a station at Mosega. The history of that Mission is one of suffering and disaster. Scarcely had the missionaries settled down and commenced their work, when nearly all the party were prostrated by fever; and one of them, Dr. Wilson, lost his wife. At this time, too, the emigrant farmers *trekking* from the Colony, during the exodus of 1836, came in contact with some of the Matabele warriors, stationed by Moselekatze along the banks of the Vaal River to prevent any inroads upon his

territory in that direction. Scenes of massacre ensued which chills the blood to read of. Scattered parties of the farmers were butchered, and their flocks and herds, and sometimes even their children, were carried off. Flesh and blood could not stand this. Friends and relatives mustered together, and forming a commando of about 200 men, under the leadership of Gert Maritz, an old Graaff-Reinet burgher, they attacked the valley in which Mosega lay, killing, it is said, 400 of the Matabele, securing a large quantity of cattle, and leaving nothing but ashes behind them.

The American missionaries had, of course, to retire with the victors,—they had now no field for their labours, and they dreaded the vengeance which the exasperated despot might deal towards any of the white race. But Moselekatze was otherwise occupied. In addition to the attacks of the farmers, a large commando of the Natal Zulus of the terrible chief Dingaan, successor to the bloody tyrant Chaka, came upon him from the east, and, terrified at their approach, Moselekatze, with his people, fled northward to the country beyond the Limpopo River.

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CHAPTER VII.

TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Great need of a Vernacular Version—Early efforts of the Bible Society to supply the Scriptures to the African Tribes—Arabic Version recommended by Mungo Park—Suggestion of Dr. Philip for a Translation into the Vernacular—Mr. Moffat commences the Sechuana Version—Publication of St. Luke's Gospel—Its happy Influence on the Natives—Completion of the New Testament and the Psalms—Visit of Mr. Moffat to England to superintend the Printing—Departure of Dr. Livingstone with a supply of copies—Return Africa of Mr. Moffat—Commencement of the Sechuana Version of the Old Testament—Translation of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress—The Native Church at Kuruman—Severe Drought—Completion of the Bible in the Sechuana.

DURING Moffat's temporary absence from Kuruman, the interests of the Mission at that place were assiduously attended to by Mr. Hamilton and Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, as well as by his own faithful helpmate, Mrs. Moffat. Large additions to the number of church adherents were made, and the schools were well attended. The people made such advances in civilization, that the missionaries invited Mr. Hume, a trader in whom they had implicit confidence, to take up his abode there, for the purpose of supplying the demands for British commodities. New churches

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were formed amongst the outlying villages of the Bechuanas, and native assistants, who could read and teach, were stationed there to instruct them,—valuable auxiliaries were these for preparing the people for further advances in knowledge.

While engaged in travelling, the indefatigable missionary had been busily occupied in other work. He had on his journey translated the Assembly's Catechism, and an additional portion of the Scripture lessons; and on his return these were put to press, the demand for books being rapidly on the increase.

But one great desideratum pressed on Moffat's mind,—the natives had not the Bible in their own tongue. At the outset of his labours he had experienced considerable difficulty in acquiring the language; and had patiently to learn a few words at a time to make his wishes known. He had now, however, succeeded in mastering it, and had even reduced it to writing; and with some difficulty he was able to translate portions of the Gospel of St. Luke and some Scripture lessons and hymns, which he read to the people in their own tongue. But he saw that it was essential to the prosperity of the Mission that the whole of the Scriptures should be translated into the Sechuana language,—which, under certain modifications, is the language of the interior of Africa. He doubted his own powers, fancying that his early education had not been such as to qualify him for the duty; and therefore appealed to the Society in

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England to send some one out specially to undertake it.

The translation and publication of the Scriptures, with a view to the evangelization of Africa, had been taken up by the British and Foreign Bible Society shortly after its formation. In the year 1803, Dr. Carlyle, Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, issued a prospectus for printing an edition of the Bible in that language. Mungo Park, the African traveller, and others, were of opinion that it was sufficiently understood down to the eleventh or tenth degree of south latitude, to encourage the experiment. Park, indeed, had found the Books of Moses, the Psalms, and Isaiah, in the possession of the natives; and, in proof of the value set upon those writings, he stated that a copy of the Pentateuch alone had fetched twenty guineas. The death of Dr. Carlyle caused a delay; but the enterprise was taken up by his successor and by the Oxford Professor of Arabic, who, together with Barrington, Bishop of Durham, and Porteus, Bishop of London, brought the matter under the notice of the Society in Earl Street. "It would do great credit to the Society," said the latter prelate, "and might be of infinite service in sowing the seed of Christianity over the whole continent of Africa." The experiment, at any rate, possesses a deep historical interest, as being the first step in modern times towards the circulation of the Scriptures in that quarter of the globe. The inceptive incident in it,

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however, was remarkable for its smallness and its fortuitousness. Of the three hundred copies printed from the text of the Polyglott, which Dr. Carlyle had adopted, a dozen found their way into the hands of Mohammedan natives on that part of the coast at which a missionary of the Church Society, to whose care they had been assigned for another purpose, happened to suffer shipwreck.

To the accuracy of that text, however, Dr. Adam Clarke demurred, as did other Arabic scholars, of whom Henry Martyn was one. A new version, on which Sabat was then engaged, was thought likely to supersede every other. In South Africa, however, the first Bibles distributed by the Society were English, and the first native purchaser of one was a Hottentot. The expediency of translating the Scriptures into the native speech seems to have been first suggested by Dr. Philip. "The discoveries daily making," he remarked, "lead to a supposition that all the languages spoken from the Keiskamma to the Arabian Gulf, and from the mouth of the Zambezi to that of the Congo, are derived from the same parent stock, and are so nearly allied to each other as to furnish great facilities for the translation and general circulation of the Scriptures." The Namaqua was the first dialect into which the holy books were rendered, and the four Gospels were the first book of any kind printed in that tongue.

Meanwhile, no help came to Moffat, and the necessity for the work becoming more and more press-

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ing, he resolved to enter upon it himself. For many years he applied every spare moment he had to translating; the intervals between preaching, teaching, ploughing, working at the forge or at the printing-press, were devoted to it, so that he became almost a stranger in his own family.

In the year 1832, it came to the knowledge of the Society, that Moffat had completely translated into Sechuana the Gospel according to Luke. At that time of day, printing, even at the Cape, was in its infancy. Governor Sir Lowry Cole, therefore, kindly permitted to Mr. Moffat the use of the official press; but who was to supply him with compositors? There was nothing for it but that the missionary translator must be his own compositor; and, joined by his colleague, Mr. Edwards, he put himself to case, and, under the capable superintendence of the official printer, set in type, and struck off, both his translation of Luke's Gospel and his own Hymns, and then returned in triumph to his station, carrying with him the books, and the press that Dr. Philip had presented to him, with a supply of type, paper, and ink, and the liberality of the Cape Christians towards his new chapel.

In 1836, Moffat had the happy satisfaction of finding, on an itinerating visit, that the people were being aroused to the importance of Divine truth, and to a concern for their own souls, by hearing his version of Luke's Gospel read in their mother-tongue. "I have frequently listened with

surprise," he wrote, "to hear how minutely some who were unable to read, could repeat the story of the Woman who was a Sinner, the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, with other parables; and also to hear them date the change in their views to those narratives. The sword of the Spirit," with characteristic humility, he added, "is truly in clumsy hands; but it hath shown itself to be two-edged."

About the year 1840, Moffat's translation of the New Testament was completed; and the question arose at what press it should be printed. Arrangements were begun for doing the work, as before, at the Cape; but, on maturer thought, it was deemed better that the translator should be the bearer of his version to London, where he might have the aid of the Rev. Joseph Jowett, the Bible Society's editorial superintendent, with other advantages not to be commanded at Cape Town. The Society, in its turn, had the great benefit of his presence at its yearly meeting. His speech on the occasion fills several pages in Mr. Browne's official History. Though Moffat had to describe a state of barbarism, ignorance, and utter darkness, such as seemed to forbid all hope of success in teaching and preaching,—so much so that, after many efforts had been made, and long years had elapsed, the natives tauntingly defied him to produce one Bechuana who would bow to Jesus;—even then, however, and that is now thirty years ago, he was

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able to point, not to one only, but to hundreds, who had yielded obedience to the Saviour, and were adorning the Gospel which they professed to believe. When the unconverted heathen saw them reading the book which had produced this change, they inquired if they talked to it. "No," they answered, "it talks to us; for it is the Word of God." "What, then!" replied the strangers, "does it *speak?*" "Yes," rejoined the Christians, "it speaks to the heart!" The perfect truth of this artless explanation was often illustrated in fact; for, among those to whom the same book was read by others, it became proverbial to say, that the readers were "turning their hearts inside out!"

At a time when Commissions are engaged upon a revision of our own Authorised Version, it is peculiarly interesting to receive the venerable author of the Sechuana version, who, thirty years ago, said of the first part of his performance, "It contains many more imperfections than there are in the Vulgate; and yet, I know that that Gospel of St. Luke has been the means of leading many a wanderer to the fold of God."

Everybody knows to what a great extent the yearly meetings of the Bible Society are attended by ladies; though, perhaps, the proportion of men is larger in them than in most of the meetings held during May in Exeter Hall. At any rate, it is easy to imagine the effect produced by one of the anecdotes which Moffat there related, in illustration

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of the value set upon a single Gospel in the native tongue. Going with medicine for a sick babe, he found the mother weeping. "What aileth thee, my child?" he asked, with the missionary's tender affection towards the members of his flock: "is thy child still unwell?" "No, not that," she answered; "but my mother, my mother!" "Which of the two," he replied, "thy mother, or thy mother-in-law?" "My own dear mother," she rejoined, "she who bore me;" adding, as she held out her copy of St. Luke, "my mother, my poor mother will never hear the glad tidings of this book!"

Let it be hoped that this heart-rending foreboding may have been disappointed. For, between the years 1841 and 1843, supplies, not of one Gospel only, but 6,000 copies of the whole New Testament, with the Book of Psalms, in the Sechuana language, printed in London under Moffat's superintendence, were sent out, and spread joy and delight among the sons and daughters of the desert. It is an interesting circumstance, that to convey this boon was the first of an unparalleled series of benefits conferred upon the continent of Africa by a man whose name is equalling in lustre that of his venerable father-in-law—the renowned missionary traveller, David Livingstone.

It was during his brief visit to the mother-country at this time that Moffat published his well-known volume of "Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa," a work which, together with his public ad-

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dresses in London and elsewhere, kindled an active sympathy in the minds of the people of England in favour of missionary operations abroad.

On his return to his station at Kuruman, with Livingstone, Ross, Inglis, and Ashton, to reinforce the Mission, the work was prosecuted with renewed vigour and marked success. Urged by Livingstone and his other coadjutors, Moffat applied himself to the translation of the Old Testament. It was a labour of years; but he went on with it as he had leisure, daily and nightly, without intermission.

To the Book of Psalms there were first added the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Isaiah; of which two hundred copies were printed for circulation. In 1851, he appears, from the testimony of Mr. Hughes, of Griqua Town, to have completed the rough draft, at least, of the whole Bible. From a communication of the translator's own pen to the Society, in 1854, we learn that he was still engaged in making the version as perfect as he could. The five children of Sechele had been for eighteen months under Mr. and Mrs. Moffat's exclusive care, and the chief had come to take them home. It is not improbable that even their childish prattle had tended to familiarize their eminent instructor with the exact idioms of their native speech; while their father was struck with admiration when he heard how beautifully the words of Divine truth sounded from their instructed lips. They carried with them to their distant home so

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much of the sacred books as had then been printed; and the first volume of the Old Testament, ending with the Second Book of Kings, was at that time nearly through the press. Thus out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, even in the wilds of Africa, did God ordain strength and perfect praise.

The year 1846 was a year fraught with encouragement to the Mission. Nearly fifty members were added to the church of which Moffat was pastor; and, at the out-stations, the blessing of God was vouchsafed to the simple efforts of the native assistants. In all its departments the Mission was advancing; and, in the peaceful death of the chief Matebe, Moffat had witnessed a conspicuous proof of the power of the Gospel over barbarian minds.

The following year, on the contrary, was one of peculiar trouble and anxiety. From long and severe drought, the crops had almost wholly failed, and dismay and distress were general. While, however, this disaster hindered the work of grace in the individual heart, the preparatory work of instruction knew no intermission. As some portions of the Sechuana Scriptures were passing through the mission press, others were being rendered into that language by the indefatigable leader of the missionary host. While the father was producing ten thousand copies of the erudite Assembly's Catechism in the rudest of tongues, and while the Proverbs of Solomon, simultaneously with the Pil-

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grim of Bunyan, were issuing in the speech of the Bechuanas from the same press, the daughter, in her infant school, was preparing the babes and sucklings of the tribe to appreciate and enjoy them. From year to year the work of Christian education proceeded, not, indeed, at those large and rapid strides to which older races are accustomed, yet with a sure, though gradual advance. Few years passed without some additions to the church. These, it is evident, might easily have been more frequent and more numerous, but for the conscientious care judiciously taken to guard against the premature entrance of imperfectly converted or slenderly informed candidates.

It was found necessary, now and again, to exercise extreme discipline upon great or persisting offenders; but, though excluded from church fellowship, they were neither forgotten nor neglected; and it is pleasing to observe, that the readmission of the penitent was as frequent as the expulsion of the delinquent. The missionaries had repeated occasion to acknowledge, that a part of those who were in fellowship did not manifest such ardent and constant zeal for the salvation of other souls as is one of the best signs of personal piety, and ought to be deemed essential to Christian character and consistency. There has always been, however, in the church at Kuruman a majority of brethren faithful to their convictions and to the duties consequent upon them.

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These have steadily grown both in knowledge and in zealousness of good works. They have perceived the duty, and acquired the habit, of giving of their substance for the conveyance to others of that Gospel which is become salvation to themselves; and the statistical returns from time to time have shown, that this form of practical Christianity exerts increasing power upon them, and that they not merely give as prosperity enables, and as opportunity requires, but, even in the worst seasons, make some reserve for the work of evangelization.

In 1848, the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes had been finished, and Isaiah begun. In 1849, "Pilgrim's Progress" was in high favour among the reading people. In 1850, Mr. Freeman formed, besides the three Sunday services in Sechuana, and a fourth in Dutch, a "Pilgrim's class," as well as a Bible one. The next year was one of excessive and protracted drought. During nine months there was no moisture. Except upon irrigated spots, the country was harvestless, grassless, milkless. Elijah-like, however, Moffat persevered in prayer, and there came abundance of rain. Meanwhile, though amidst many interruptions, he was hard at work on the revision and completion of the Books of Moses, and on the perfecting of his version of the Minor Prophets in manuscript. With what feelings must he have dwelt at such a time upon the words and the faith of Habakkuk: "Although the fig tree shall not

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blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

The year 1852 was marked by mingled encouragement and trial. The church members did not all evince a ruling desire to honour the name of Christ, their acknowledged Head. Yet, as many as seven native evangelists had by this time gone forth from Kuruman, and were, in spite of prejudice, blessed in their labours. By the decease of the venerable Mr. Hamilton, Moffat lost his faithful coadjutor in the labours of thirty-four years; but age and infirmity had incapacitated him for all exertion; and having, like Simeon, seen the Lord's salvation, he was, like him, graciously allowed to depart in peace. In Mr. Ashton, the missionary veteran had, however, received a most vigorous, active, and effective assistant. While the parts beyond were deplorably subject to the marauding attacks of the unscrupulous Boers, Kuruman was mercifully exempt from their rude and robber-like incursions. The state of the mother and daughter churches grew more encouraging, the minds of the people were better informed, their grounds were being brought under more careful cultivation, and not a few made a livelihood out of the produce of their gardens, besides the purchase of tools and

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clothes. Beyond Kuruman, necessity, the mother of invention, had stimulated the native mind; and, in imitation of their more advanced countrymen, the outlying people began to work the fountains and lead out the waters. Indicative of a true and therefore lasting civilization, the greater permanence of the new state of things, and the more settled ways of the people, were almost uniformly found in connection with the power of reading with ease, and the capability of conducting religious services.

Meanwhile, the work of translating, revising, and printing the Bible never ceased. Joshua succeeded to Moses, and Samuel to Joshua; and in 1853 the Second Book of Kings was nearly ready for press. In 1857 we find Moffat still sighing for more conversions among the people, while the people were in deep solicitude on account of the lung disease among their cattle. Nevertheless, the new habits of life were taking firmer hold upon them, and the examples set by their moral and intellectual leaders were leading them up the path of civilization to the high point of building substantial dwellings for themselves, and arranging them neatly and orderly within.

The veteran missionary now saw himself nearing the completion of his translation labours, and scarcely knew whether to wish or to deprecate their close. Jeremiah was in the press, Ezekiel far advanced, Daniel and the rest ready for the compositor; and then the Old Testament would be complete. "A couple of months," he wrote to a

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friend, "will finish Ezekiel; a load will then be removed from off my mind, a load with respect to which I have often felt as if it would crush me, yet have as often felt as though my very existence depended upon the prosecution of this work. I have felt, in short, as if I must die if I dropped it; or, at least, be miserable to the end of my days, did I not enlist all the time, research, and perseverance at my command in its accomplishment. In fine, I have felt it to be an awful work to translate the Book of God; and, perhaps, this has given to my heart the habit of sometimes beating like the strokes of a hammer. After getting the brain refreshed, I shall hasten to a revision of the New Testament, a comparatively easy work."

At length, the long labour of years was over, and the last verse of the Old Testament was completed. What Moffat's emotions were at this time he has himself thus feelingly described: "I could hardly believe that I was in the world, so difficult was it for me to realize the fact that my work of so many years was completed. Whether it was from weakness or overstrained mental exertion, I cannot tell; but a feeling came over me as if I should die, and I felt perfectly resigned. To overcome this I went back again to my manuscript, still to be printed, read it over and re-examined it, till at length I got back again to my right mind. This was the most remarkable time of my life, a period which I shall never forget. My feelings found vent by my falling

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upon my knees and thanking God for His grace and goodness in giving me strength to accomplish my task."

What Morrison did for the natives of China, and Carey and Marshman for the races of India, Robert Moffat thus accomplished for the tribes of South Central Africa—placed in their hands the Word of God in their own language; and if his life's labours had only attained the accomplishment of this great task, it alone would entitle him to the lasting gratitude of universal Christendom.

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CHAPTER VIII.

MISSION TO THE MATABELE AND MAKOLOLO.

Third visit of Mr. Moffat to Moselekatze—Missionary Influence of Dr. Livingstone's Travels—Consent of Moselekatze to receive Missionaries—Release of a Royal Captive—Arrival of new Missionaries at Cape Town—Prosperous commencement of the Matabele Mission, under Mr. Moffat's guidance—Departure of the Makololo Mission, under Mr. Helmore—Sufferings on the journey—Death of Mr. and Mrs. Helmore, and three children—Rapacity of the Makololo—Death of Mr. Price—Abandonment of the Mission.

WHILE engaged in the work of Bible translation, and when he had got through the Book of Kings, the health of Mr. Moffat suffered considerably. The Directors of the Society at home were afraid he was killing himself with overwork, and urged him to revisit England, or to enjoy a holiday at some of the seaports of the colony. But he declined these invitations to ease and idleness, and decided to try the effects of change of air by looking up his old acquaintance, Moselekatze, who was known to occupy the country northwards of the River Limpopo.

Two travellers, Messrs. Chapman and Edwards, were proceeding in that direction in June, 1854, on a hunting and trading expedition, and he joined the

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last-named, who undertook to go to Moselekatze's town. It was a journey of some six hundred or seven hundred miles from Kuruman. There was no road or track to guide them, and they had to have recourse to their compass in threading their way, in a north-easterly direction, through the prairies of long grass, through dense forests, and across rocky ravines and hills. At length they met with some natives who were subject to the Matabele king, and whom they sent forward as messengers to the nearest village, to announce that Moffat (or Moshitu, as they pronounced it) of the Kuruman was seeking Moselekatze. Although those who heard this message had never seen Moffat before, they were familiar with the name, and assured him that the king had long been inquiring after him, and would receive him with delight.

A week afterwards they reached Matlokotloko, the residence of Moselekatze. They were not greeted with the martial display which took place on the occasion of Moffat's first visit. The once vigorous and active king was somewhat aged, lame in the feet, and unable to move, from a dropsical affection caused by his immoderate beer-drinking. As Moffat approached him, he grasped his hand, gave him an impressive look, then drew his mantle over his eyes, and wept.

Nearly twenty years had passed since the barbarian monarch had seen or heard of the Christian missionary; and now, though he was before him

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and he heard his voice, he could not get quit of the impression that it was a vision. "Surely I am only dreaming that it is Moffat." During the interval of time that had passed, he said, he had often desired that he might once again see "the man of the pure heart;" and had made many endeavours to find out whether he was alive, and where he was; and he regarded the present visit as something miraculous, for, in his sickly condition, he required help and healing. Under Moffat's medical care, and by the enforcement of strict regimen, he recovered, and was soon able to walk about. His people still seemed to adore him, and to sing his praises as a demi-god. His power was fully as great as ever it had formerly been; for, on settling in this part of the country, he effectually subjugated all the neighbouring tribes, and his dominions extended northwards to the banks of the Zambesi.

Moffat found that the advice which he had given Moselekatze, during his previous intercourse with him, had not been altogether lost; for the officers who attended him, as well as those of lower grades, stated that the rigour of the government had from that time been greatly modified; and this accounted for the universal pleasure which the missionary's visit seemed to produce.

This statement seems borne out by the fact that while Livingstone was on the banks of the Zambesi, he learned from the natives there, that the English had come to Moselekatze, and told him it was wrong

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to kill men; and that he had replied he was born to kill people, but would drop the habit; and since the English came he had sent out his men, not to kill as of yore, but to collect tribute of cloth and ivory. This report referred to Moffat's mission. The fact is interesting, as showing that, though imperfectly expressed, the purport of the missionary's teaching had travelled far over the country.

But great as Moselekatze's esteem for the missionary appeared to be, he had much difficulty in obtaining permission to preach to the people. While professing admiration for the Word of God, the king cunningly insinuated, that, though it was good for the great and wise, it would do no good to the Matabele, who were "great rogues." After much importunity, however, the monarch relented, gave his consent to the assembling of his people to hear the words of the teacher, and even himself attended. The 24th of September, 1854, was a red-letter day in Moffat's life. He had at last obtained that which he had long prayed for,—the opportunity of addressing the Matabele, who had never heard a word of Christian instruction in their lives, on the subjects of creation, providence, death, redemption, and immortality. And during the continuance of his visit, this privilege was unreservedly accorded.

Before Moffat had left Kuruman, his son-in-law, Dr. David Livingstone,—who, while pursuing the missionary work at Kolobeng, in consequence of the

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attacks of some of the Transvaal farmers on that station, had been compelled to set his face northward to look for a new field for his people,—was engaged in his memorable journey across the continent of Africa. If he returned safely from Loando, it was desirable that supplies should reach him at Linyanti, the chief place of the Makololo tribe, who resided northwards of the Matabele. Moffat had laid his plans to endeavour to get Moselekatze to aid him in this undertaking, although it was a difficult matter, as the Matabele and Makololo were hostile to each other.

At first he proposed to undertake the journey himself, with the hope of meeting Livingstone if he had returned from the West Coast. To this, however, Moselekatze raised many objections, as the road lay through the fatal tsetse and fever swamps; but the king finally agreed to furnish a sufficient number of men to carry the goods and papers for Livingstone as far as Linyanti. A selection of the men best acquainted with the country was made, who were repeatedly instructed what they would have to do. Placing the bags, boxes, etc., on their heads and shoulders, with shields and spears in their hands, they marched off on their journey through, perhaps, as wild and desolate a region as can well be found—through forests, over mountains and morasses—to the country of those who were their enemies. They performed their duty very faithfully, leaving the goods on an island near the Zambesi Falls, where the Makololo

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took charge of them, and where Livingstone found them nearly a year afterwards.

Towards the end of October Moffat took his leave of Moselekatze. The king pressed him to prolong his stay, pleading that he had not seen enough of him, and that he had not yet shown him sufficient kindness. "Kindness!" Moffat replied; "you have overwhelmed me with kindness, and I shall now return with a heart overflowing with thanks." Leaving him a supply of suitable medicines to keep his system in tolerable order, and admonishing him to give up beer-drinking, and to receive any Christian teacher who might come as he had received him, the missionary took his departure. By this journey Moffat's health was much improved, his intercourse and friendship with the people of the interior were cemented and extended, and he looked forward with hopeful assurance to the early extension of Christianity to those distant regions.

Dr. Livingstone's visit to England in 1856, after his unparalleled walk from Loando to Quillemane —from the shores of the Atlantic to those of the Indian Ocean—gave a fresh impetus to the Mission cause at home. The elevation of the natives of Africa was the great object he aimed at enforcing upon the public mind; to him "the end of the geographical feat was the beginning of the missionary enterprise." Even the ancient Universities of the mother-country were moved to unusual enthusiasm by his appeal, and sent forth their representatives

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to battle with the heathenism of Central Africa; while the London Missionary Society redoubled their generous exertions, and resolved to extend their labours by establishing missions among the Matabele and the Makololo. Moffat, in his home at Kuruman, received the news with great gladness. It reached him just as he had finished the translation and printing of the Bible; and although now advanced in years, and beginning to feel the eventime of life approaching, he at once, and with all the ardour of youth, set out again for the country of the Matabele, in order to obtain Moselekatze's consent to the settlement of the missionaries among his people.

During his former sojourn with him, Moffat had set forth the value of Divine knowledge, and what Christianity had done for the wisest and greatest of nations. But when the king was urged to receive Christian teachers, the invariable answer to the missionary was, "You must come also; I love you; you are my father." Other tribes might have received missionaries, come from whence they might. But not so with the Matabelian monarch; he had acquired sufficient knowledge to understand that, if the doctrines of the word of God were to prevail among the Matabele, *his* godship would be inevitably overthrown. He loved power, and his influence over his people was overwhelming. Yet, for all that, there was something in the Gospel which he could not help admiring. Feeling the dread which all tyrants feel, he once said, "If all

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would think and act as that book teaches," pointing to the Bible, "how sweetly could I sleep!"

Moffat felt therefore the paramount necessity of giving to the proposed mission the full weight of his influence and authority, in order to secure for the new teachers the confidence both of the king and of his people. At the same time he endeavoured to make careful provision for the future aid and comfort of those brethren who would thus constitute the advanced outpost of Christianity, beyond the limits of civilized communication, in that distant region. "There is one thing," he writes to the Directors, "which I think ought not to be lost sight of; that is, an intermediate station as a connecting link between this and Moselekatze, for seven hundred miles is a long stretch in an ox waggon. This station ought also to be sufficiently strong to allow one missionary to itinerate on a large scale; that is, so as to enable him to go and remain two months at one, and then at another, or more interior station."

As Moffat again approached the Matabele territory, it was gratifying to hear that not Moselekatze alone, but the people in general, longed for another visit from him. Every visit, it was stated, had been of service to them, especially the last; the Matabele had themselves heard what the missionary had taught, and his teaching had made Moselekatze more lenient and forgiving, and had influenced him to modify his severe measures. The chief had raised many of his subjects to become *mantolo*

(men), *i.e.*, allowed them to wear a ring on their heads, and marry, and his kindly deeds had produced general pleasure. The only wish now was that Moffat might not relax in his counsels, and that Moselekatze might become better still.

The welcome that was again accorded to the missionary by Moselekatze was cordial and unreserved; and once more the voice of the Christian teacher was heard pleading with the monarch in behalf of the captive and the oppressed. Owing to a return of his previous weakness in the ancles and knees, the king was unable to appear much in public; but in his own residence he held long and frequent converse with his disinterested friend and counsellor.

At an early interview, Moffat unfolded the object of his visit; that he was come to say that the great teachers in England, having heard of Moselekatze's willingness to be instructed, had resolved to send him two teachers. The king promptly remarked, "You must come too. How shall I get on with people I do not know, if you are not with me?" Then, snapping his fingers, "By all means, by all means," he said, "bring teachers; you are wise, you are able to judge what is good for me and my people better than I do. The land is yours, you must do for it what you think is good." He was told that all required was a place where there was a command of water, where the missionaries could live and have many people to teach; that they

would not look to him for food, but would plant, sow, and purchase what they might require. The subject was frequently referred to during Moffat's stay, and in no case did the king deviate from what he first assented to. At the same time, care was taken to make the monarch fully understand what the duty of the missionaries would be; that he was not to expect that the teachers would ever become traders, but that he would have to look for foreign supplies to those whose business it was to trade with the natives. The necessity of making arrangements to carry on a trade with those who intended opening up intercourse with the tribes on the Zambesi river, was especially urged upon him.

A striking proof of Moffat's influence over the barbarian monarch occurred at this time, in the deliverance, at his intercession, of a princely captive, then in Moselakatze's power.

Macheng, the paramount chief of the Bamanguato tribe, a young man about twenty-six years of age, was the son of Khari, the former king of the Bamanguatos, who was killed in an engagement while Macheng was yet a child. During his minority, Macheng was under the care of the chief Sechele, at that time the head of a small portion of the Bakuena. While Sechele was absent on a foray, a handful of the Matabele fell upon his undefended town, and carried away many captives, among whom were Macheng and his eldest sister. The latter escaped by finding her way back through the interminable intricacies

of the forest; but young Macheng, then a boy of ten years of age, continued a captive for sixteen years, and, but for Moffat's interference, would in all probability have remained so to the end of his days.

When entreated by the missionary for the release of the prince, Moselekatze said that it was contrary to the custom of the Matabele to return a royal prisoner to his people; but he finally placed the captive at Moffat's disposal. It was after a long conversation that the thing was settled. Straightway Macheng was called. He entered, evidently with bright hopes of the future, and sat down with the usual salutations. Moselekatze, sitting in his arm-chair, half laughing, said, "Macheng, man of Moffat, go with your father. We have arranged respecting you. Moffat will take you back to Sechele. That is my wish, as well as his, that you should be in the first instance restored to the chief from whom you were taken in war. When captured you were a child; I have reared you to be a man." Never before had tones so sweet fallen upon the captive's ear. The attendants praised the greatness and goodness of their king; while, as Moffat left the royal presence to where his waggon stood, the shout was raised, "There goes Macheng; Moffat is taking Macheng to his people."

The effect of this deliverance on the neighbouring tribes was very great. When Moffat and his charge arrived at Sechele's town, he, with the other chiefs of his tribe, marched before them to a kind

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of natural amphitheatre, which was crowded with at least 10,000 people, in all their equipments of war. After Sechele had stood up and commanded silence, he introduced the business of the meeting. Then speaker followed speaker, expressing, in enthusiastic language, the pleasure they felt at seeing the chief of the Bamanguato return from captivity. "Ye tribes, ye children of the ancients," said one of them, "this day is a day of marvel. That which awakes my heart to wonder is to see the Spirit's work. My thoughts within me begin to move. Verily, the things I have seen, and the words I have heard, assume stability. When I first heard the Word of God, I began to ask, Are these things true? Now the confusion of my thoughts and of my soul is unravelled. Now I begin to perceive that those who preach are verily true. If Moffat were not of God, he would not have espoused the cause of Sechele, in receiving his words, and delivering Macheng from the dwelling-place of the beasts of prey, to which we Bechuanas dared not approach. There are who contend that there is nothing in religion. Let such to-day throw away their unbelief. If Moffat were not such a man he would not have done what he has done, in bringing him who was lost—him who was dead—from the strong bondage of the mighty. Moselekatze is a lion; he conquered nations, he robbed the strong ones, he bereaved mothers,—he took away the son of Khari. We talk of love. What is love? We hear of the

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love of God. Is it not through the love of God that Macheng is among us to-day? A stranger, one of a nation—who of you knows its distance from us?—he makes himself one of us, enters the lion's abode, and brings out to us our own blood."

One of the Matabele, who accompanied Moffat and the prince, and in whose charge Macheng had been placed during his captivity, then addressed the meeting in a touching speech. At the close of it, looking round on the silent multitude, he asked, rather sternly: "Ye tribes, why did ye covet my child?" and then, turning to the missionary, with softened tone: "Why did you, Moffat, prevail with the son of Machobane to make me childless? I shall return to the desert and weep. He is gone from me; but I shall never forget that I am the father of the son of Khari, who is now the son of Moffat." He concluded his pathetic address with some remarks on the light in which the tribes ought now to view Moselekatze. The whole scene produced a thrilling effect; and the minds of the assembly, which had been taken by surprise by the presence of the dreaded Matabele among them, were in raptures to hear such fraternizing language from those who, though distant, had been, till then, a terror by night and day. Such a demonstration had never before been made in the country, and could not readily be forgotten.

On returning from this journey, Moffat visited Cape Town, where he met Livingstone (whom he

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had not seen for six years), then on his way to the Zambesi, to prosecute his geographical search, and to choose a site for the ill-fated University Mission, in the Shire Valley. A few months afterwards (in 1859), he had the pleasure of welcoming his own son, John Moffat, who, with Messrs. Price, Thomas, Sykes, and Mackenzie, had arrived from England to labour among the Makololo and Matabele. Here, also, he received the hearty co-operation of Sir George Grey, Her Majesty's High Commissioner, who warmly encouraged the proposed plans for extending Christianity and commerce to the interior tribes, and who arranged with him for establishing a postal communication with the Zambesi, *vid* Kuruman.

Having completed all the preparations which human foresight and control could devise for the success of the enterprise, Moffat started off with the mission party for their destination. At Kuruman they divided—one branch under the direction of Mr. Helmore, an old veteran who had been stationed many years at Lekatlong, advancing north to the Makololo; the other branch proceeding to the Matabele, accompanied by Moffat, under whose auspices and presence they received a warm welcome from Moselekatze, who seemed unabated in his attachment.

The closing stage in this journey presented a scene never before witnessed in South Africa. Before reaching the Matabele frontier, Moffat had

sent to Moselekatze an intimation of his fears respecting an epidemic which had shown itself among the young oxen purchased for the journey. An answer arrived that they were to proceed; and that though the epidemic should take effect, they should be held guiltless. But, with judicious care, the veteran missionary despatched another messenger to say that he had heard the king's words, and in a couple of days would leave; but that he begged the monarch to reflect on the consequences of the epidemic being introduced among his tens of thousands of cattle, and to believe that the mission party felt the most extreme anxiety on the subject. Having proceeded very slowly for two or three days, they were met by another messenger, who stated that Moselekatze was gratified beyond description with the anxiety expressed for the welfare of him and his; and that now, fully convinced of the danger, he desired that all their oxen should immediately return, to be cared for at a Malakala village, and that *machaha* (warriors) were advancing to drag the mission waggons to head-quarters. Every one stared with surprise at the strange idea; but they had not long to wait ere the warriors came—shields and spears, and all—also a number of oxen for slaughter, to supply the commissariat. They instantly went through some of their war evolutions—new sights to the new missionaries. Then the start was made, and away they went—the men occupying the place of the oxen—over hill and dale,

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over bushes and stones, or wending slowly along through the trees, along a tract scarcely visible, breaking forth occasionally with the harsh tones of the war song. Now and then a waggon would come to a dead halt, by the wheel getting into a hole, or against a tree stump; but with "a strong pull, and a long pull, and a pull all together," out again it would come. A strange sight was it to see the waggons, their sides and backs covered with shields and spears, of both of which Moffat's waggon had a triple share.

At the station thus prosperously opened among the Matabele, Moffat's son, John Moffat, has been labouring until a year or two ago, when he removed to Kuruman to succeed his venerable father in the charge of that station. This mission to the Matabele is now the furthest outpost of the London Missionary Society. It is in a prosperous state, and although Moselekatze has been gathered to his fathers, the mission has found favour with his successor, Nobengulu, and his people, who, next to the Zulus of Natal, are the most important nation of South Eastern Africa.

While Moffat had conducted his band of missionaries in safety to their destination, calamity the most terrible had overtaken the other missionary party, which, under the guidance of Mr. Helmore, had proceeded to the Makololo, north of the Zambesi river. Their melancholy fate will long be remembered as one of the most sad and touching stories of missionary disaster. The difficulties and dangers

attendant on their journey to Linyanti, were such as nothing but the noblest Christian principle would have induced them to encounter, or enabled them to surmount. The chief of these was the destitution of water, both for themselves and their oxen; so that they were repeatedly obliged to remain several weeks in the vicinity of a fountain, not knowing how remote the next might prove.

One of these trials of faith and patience is thus described:—"From the Zouga we travelled on pretty comfortably, till near the end of November, when we suffered much from want of water, in the neighbourhood of a place named Gukobo, which, by way of distinction, was named 'Detention Pool.' For more than a week every drop of water we used had to be walked for about thirty-five miles. Mrs. Helmore's feelings may be imagined, when, one afternoon, the thermometer standing at 107 deg. in the shade, she was saving just *one spoonful of water* for each of the dear children for the next morning, not thinking of taking a drop herself. Mr. Helmore, with the men, was then away searching for water; and when he returned the next morning with the precious fluid, we found that he had walked full *forty miles*."

"The poor children," writes Mrs. Helmore, referring to another occasion, "continually asked for water; I put them off as long as I could, and when they could be denied no longer, doled the precious fluid out, a spoonful at a time, to each of them. Poor

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Selina and Henry cried bitterly. Willie bore up manfully, but his sunken eyes showed how much he suffered. Occasionally I observed a convulsive twitching of his features, showing what an effort he was making to restrain his feelings. As for dear Lizzie, she did not utter a word of complaint, nor even asked for water, but lay on the ground all the day perfectly quiet, her lips quite parched and blackened with thirst."

At length, after enduring innumerable difficulties and privations for seven months, they arrived at Linyanti, the residence of the chief Sekeletu.

Meanwhile nothing had been seen or heard of Dr. Livingstone, who was to have met them here and introduced them to the chief; and a consultation was held as to what they should do. Sekeletu refused to allow them to remove elsewhere, or even to point out a healthy place where they could settle down and wait Dr. Livingstone's arrival; but proposed that they should live with him. This proposition was, of necessity, accepted, and the mission party began forthwith to build temporary houses.

But now began a dark chapter in the history of the Makololo Mission. In the course of a week all the party were laid low with fever. The first to die was little Henry Helmore; two days after, the infant babe of Mr. Price was laid by his side. Four days from that, Selina Helmore was cut off; and on the following day, Mrs. Helmore fell asleep in Jesus. Within six weeks of his wife's death, Mr. Helmore

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also breathed his last; and the lonely mission was deprived of its veteran leader.

From this scene of pestilence and death the solitary missionary and his devoted wife prepared to depart, as the only means of saving their own lives and the lives of the little orphans entrusted to their care. The responsibility now fell upon Mr. Price, and he was so reduced as hardly to be able to move, while his wife had entirely lost the use of her feet and legs.

Preparations were forthwith made for returning. Up to that time the Makololo had been pretty quiet, though whether the missionaries lived or died did not appear to trouble them. But when Mr. Price began to prepare for going away, then fresh troubles arose. Things were taken by force, if they were not delivered up willingly; and even the clothes that Mr. Price had been wearing during the day, were stolen at night from the foot of his bed. When the missionary was on the point of starting, Sekeletu came, and, without any ceremony, took possession of Mr. Helmore's new waggon, and a host of other goods, with all the guns and ammunition; and finally a messenger came from the chief making yet more extravagant demands, before he would allow the missionary to go away. "I said," writes Mr. Price, "if they did not let me go soon, they would have to bury me beside the others. To this, I was simply told, that I might as well die there as anywhere else."

At length, after a good deal of pleading, a few things were allowed for the journey. "Already," writes Mr. Price, "they had taken all my bed-clothing, with the exception of what was just sufficient for one bed. But before my oxen could cross the Chobe, I had to deliver up one blanket. Every grain of corn which I had for food for the men they had taken; and I did not get even a goat for slaughter on the road. These were my prospects for a journey of upwards of a thousand miles to Kuruman."

The cup of affliction, however, was not yet full. Just when the missionary and his wife were beginning to breathe again, after their heavy trials, and to look forward yet to renewed efforts in the Master's service, the message came to call the gentle lady to her rest and reward. "My dear wife," writes her sorrowing husband, "had been for a long time utterly helpless, but we all thought she was getting better. In the morning early I found her breathing very hard. She went to sleep that night, alas! to wake no more. I spoke to her, and tried to wake her, but it was too late. I watched her all the morning. She became worse and worse, and a little after midday her spirit took its flight to God who gave it. I buried her the same evening under a tree—the only tree on the immense plain of the Mahabe. This is indeed a heavy stroke, but 'God is my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'"

The establishment of the Makololo Mission had been projected by Dr. Livingstone—the only man who was familiar both with the country and the people. Its execution was committed, at Livingstone's suggestion, to his friend and fellow-labourer, Helmore, as being well acquainted with the native language, and qualified for the work by the experience of twenty years' labour among a people whom he found as debased and wretched as the Makololo, but whom, by God's blessing, he had elevated to the dignity and happiness of Christian life. If any could have conquered the selfishness and cruelty of the heathen chief, the courage, patience, and disinterested love of Helmore and his companions would have ensured the triumph; and the calamity that overtook the Mission at Linyanti was not owing to ignorance on his part of the attendant dangers, but because his well-founded expectations of removing to a salubrious locality were utterly frustrated by its despotic ruler; in consequence of which he was compelled to remain, with the party entrusted to his care, amidst swamps teeming with pestilence and death.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE HOME STATION.

Return of Mr. Moffat to Kuruman—Prosperous state of the Mission—Severe Drought—Family Affliction—Removal of Mr. Ashton to Lekatlong—Mr. John Moffat appointed to the Kuruman Station—His description of the Mission work—Medical Duties—Social and religious condition of the Bechuanas—Want of Native Teachers—Extension of Education—Death of Moselekatze.

HAVING safely escorted the new missionaries to the court and country of Moselekatze, Mr. Moffat returned to his own station, and found it in peace, notwithstanding the perturbation produced elsewhere by the menaces and molestations of the restless and irrepressible Boers. Unfortunately, however, even Kuruman was not exempt from the visitations of drought, on which account many of the people, urged by necessity, had betaken themselves, some to the hunting grounds, and others to the nearest settlements in quest of remunerative employment. The anxiety produced by this adversity, however, was mitigated by the signs of success in church, congregation, and school, and, in a touching degree, by the glad discovery that during his absence his

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own two daughters had, "in answer to prayer and longing desires, been led to give themselves to the Lord."

In the year 1862, in addition to drought and its effects was added the prevalence of infectious disease. Measles and small-pox broke out, and spread among the people at Kuruman, as well as in surrounding parts; but to all it must have been an impressive evidence both of the value of medical resources and of the benefit of civilized habits, when they saw how much less severe and less fatal these ailments were among the converts at the mission station than among their less favoured neighbours. The drought continued and increased in 1863, being aggravated by an intense heat. Wholesome food became so exceedingly scarce, that the starving people were fain to devour whatever they could find growing in the wilderness. Indulgence in this wild food was producing disease, and not seldom causing death, when it pleased God to remove the plague of famine by giving a plentiful and continuous rain. The same year was one of heavy sorrow to the missionary household. Within a few weeks of each other, Mr. and Mrs. Moffat were called to mourn the death of Mrs. Livingstone, their eldest daughter, and of Mr. Robert Moffat, junior, their eldest son, each of whom left behind a weeping partner and four children.

About the end of 1863 or the beginning of 1864, Mr. Moffat sustained a serious public loss in the

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removal of his colleague to Lekatlong. Mr. Ashton had been of great service to him for some years, being a man able and willing to turn his hand to anything, from binding a book to correcting the sheets of which it was composed; and he had rendered Moffat invaluable help in the important work of translating the Scriptures into the Sechuana language. About this time, death also made inroads upon the Mission as well as upon the family of the missionary. But the members who died, died well; and the church continued to advance, while the school, yielding entire satisfaction, left nothing to desire, "only that they had the means of leading on the more intelligent to higher branches."

Mr. Moffat had by this time fulfilled his threescore years and ten; and, though at times he was afflicted to observe the detrimental effect of bad European examples upon the native Christian mind, he was encouraged to find his translations of the Scriptures in demand by the Hanoverian missionaries in the Transvaal Republic, and even from the distant colony of Port Natal. Coincidently with the receipt of these gratifying applications, he had come to the end of his revised New Testament. "I have examined," he wrote, "every sentence, I might say every word, of the New Testament with much care and no little anxiety; and have again transferred all the corrections to another copy for the convenience of the compositor. The only com-

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positor we have is an individual I placed in the printing-office after my return from England, and he has continued ever since."

The year 1866 opened with mingled prospects. The venerable missionary hailed in his son, John Moffat, a welcome substitute for Mr. Ashton,—one who, besides helping him in the printing-office, participated in his preaching labours, and gave to a class of young natives instruction in the English language. Among the people, however, bodily sickness was prevalent, with mental and moral inertness. The congregations were undiminished; but the applications for church fellowship were few, readers were inattentive, knowledge was in a backward state, and, in fine, the people generally "would not learn to reflect." Nevertheless, Mr. Moffat bore in mind the prophet's injunction, to sow morning and evening, and never to despair. He begged, therefore, that his scanty and tardy means of multiplying books might be supplemented by the more powerful agency at the disposal of the Bible Society, from whom he asked a thousand copies of his New Testament. By this time (1867) his ancient correspondent Dr. Tidman had been taken to his reward, and the missionary band furnished from among themselves the man best fitted to supply his place.

Mr. Moffat was among the first to greet the new Foreign Secretary on his appointment to the post which he now fills; and the graceful terms in which he offered his congratulations are on record in the

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Report of the Society for that year. It will, no doubt, be among the greatest pleasures of Dr. Mullens, as also among his highest honours, to be associated, by official communication with the great Society in New Earl Street, with his brother-missionary, in the printing and circulation of his complete translation of the Holy Scriptures in the Sechuana tongue, "the well-studied translation of the Bible" (in the Doctor's own words) "to which Mr. Moffat has given the strength of his life."

It is interesting to learn, from the testimony of Mr. Moffat's own son and colleague, the moral and social position reached by the Christian converts, after years of subjection to missionary influences; nor will it escape remark with what conscientious integrity the son states the apparent results of the father's long labours. In October, 1868, Mr. John Moffat thus described to the Directors the regular work of the station:—

"The public services are a prayer-meeting at sunrise on Sunday; preaching in Sechuana, morning-afternoon, and evening; with the Sunday-school twice, and a juvenile afternoon service. The early prayer-meeting is left entirely to the natives; the three preaching services to the missionaries; and the Sunday-school, with the juvenile service, to my sister. There are also a Wednesday-evening service, a monthly missionary prayer-meeting, a church meeting, and a prayer-meeting on Thursday afternoon. This last is in the hands of the natives. No

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native takes any part in the preaching on the station, except in extreme cases, when it is regarded as a make-shift. My father and I share the preaching between us. Occasionally one of us rides to two villages to the north-west, holding service at each. My custom at home is to give New Testament reading in the morning, a topical sermon in the afternoon, and Old Testament exposition in the evening. On Monday evening I have a young men's Bible-class, to me the most interesting work, especially as I have much encouragement in it. There is a marked advance on the part of my pupils. For a people so stolid and undemonstrative as the Bechuanas, I have great encouragement, and hope my work will not be in vain. On the Monday evening, also, my sister and I hold a practising class to improve the singing. On Tuesday evening, I meet male inquirers; on Wednesday, before the service, I have a Bible-class for women; on Thursday, we have our English prayer-meeting; and, on Friday evening, I meet female inquirers. I need but mention the school, conducted by my sister, with three native assistants."

Mr. John Moffat then refers to the out-stations, the printing-office, and other work :—

"There is a circuit of out-stations westward. My father paid them a visit in December, 1865; again in February, 1867; and I have just returned from them. The printing-office has occupied a large part of my time, three days in every week on an average. There is also an incessant dispensing of medicines,

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to me most unwelcome; for I have only learned enough to know how little value there is in the medical practice of any but well-qualified men. It is forced upon me by usage, like many other things, and by the persistent desire of human nature, black as well as white, to be doing 'something' for disease, even though it be a mere leap in the dark. I have rarely been able to hold an English service, though very desirous to do so. The benighted Europeans are every year becoming more numerous in this neighbourhood, and do not help on our work, though they are not unwilling to attend an occasional service, which I do not despair of setting on foot."

Mr. John Moffat speaks with modest contempt of his own poor skill in medicine; but his father before him had found, that, in such lands and among such people, a man must be a surgeon as well as a physician, in spite of himself. "Titus," a member of the Africaner family, a kind of mock Bonaparte, had two wives (a moderate number for a polygamist chief), who, as not seldom happens, quarrelled. One of them, in a pet, had thrown a big stick at the other. The missile entered the palm of the hand, which, as the effect, had swollen to four times its natural size. Of course, there had been a long delay in having recourse to Mr. Moffat. The wounded spouse was afraid to approach him until well assured that he was "tame." He easily made the requisite incision, and withdrew the cause of the rankling sore. While

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softened into tears of gratitude, the patient was exhorted to behave better for the future.

With regard to the number and social condition of the people, Mr. J. Moffat speaks as follows:—"The population is small and scattered, as compared with other parts of the Bechuana field. On the spot there must be a good many people, and also at two villages north-west; otherwise, the district contains only villages of from twenty to a hundred huts. It extends fifty miles west and north-west, and twenty-five in other directions. A Christian village, 170 miles north-east, has placed itself under our charge. The people are poor, and must remain so. The country is essentially dry. Irrigation is necessary for successful agriculture, and there are few spots where water flows. There is no market for cattle, even if they throve, which they do not. I despair of much advance in civilization, where resources are so small, and where the European trade is on the principle of enormous profits and losses. Two hundred per cent. on Port Elizabeth prices is not considered out of the way! I am obliged to send to England or the Coast for clothing; what is obtained here is worthless and dear. I have not yet seen any staple industry for our Bechuanas. The ostrich feather trade, like all hunting, retards civilization. The political framework is disintegrating. I am not disposed to take alarm at the encroachments of the Dutch Republics —Transvaal and Orange Free State. The country is

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too poor to be coveted by Europeans, and the Bechuanas may perhaps be allowed to exist. This station is the one spot to tempt the Boers. If anything could de done to secure it by convention with the British Government, the whole district would then be left unmolested; for, without the spring and the gardens here, there is nothing."

On the all-important point of the religious condition of the natives, Mr. J. Moffat speaks with that moderation which inspires confidence and carries conviction:—"Heathenism is weak; in many places nowhere. Christianity, too, meets with little opposition. The people generally are prodigious Bible-readers, church-goers, and psalm-singers: I fear, to a large extent, without knowledge. Religion, to them, consists in the above operations, and in giving a sum to the Auxiliary. I speak of the *generality*. Many I cannot but feel to be Christians, but dimly. This can hardly be the result of low mental power alone. The Bechuanas show considerable acuteness where circumstances call it out. The educational department of the mission has been kept in the background. On this station the youth, on leaving school, have sunk back, for want of a continued course open to them. The village schoolmasters, uneducated themselves, and mostly unpaid, make but a feeble impression. The wonder is they do so much, and where the readers come from. It is hard to say that the older missionaries could have done otherwise. When manual labour and menial duties

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were accepted as a share of a missionary's normal occupations, it is not wonderful that he failed to advance his native pupils to a high standard of attainments. Oh! that the principles which first publicly shaped themselves in the Liverpool Conference of Missions, and have lately been enforced in your 'despatches,' had been recognized earlier. I cannot tell you how one thing presses on me every day—the want of qualified Native schoolmasters and teachers; and the question is, How are they to be obtained? I do not see much likelihood of the people ever meeting the expenses of the European agency among them. It would be a painful position, even if practicable. We are very much better off than they, for they are often but half clothed and half fed. They could support their own *native* agents and schoolmasters, however; and they would, I believe, contribute to local objects. At any rate, it might be tried."

About the same time the Directors heard from Mr. Robert Moffat also, and found pleasure in observing, that, in spite of advancing years, the letter was "written with his usual firm hand." The brother missionaries were about to assemble at the Kuruman to discuss several matters of importance, and their veteran chief thus expressed his views on the new measures for the extension of education:—

"Apart from your valuable suggestions, it was resolved by my son John and myself to bring the subject of a school for superior training prominently

before the brethren. The want is increasingly felt. But there was no help for it; for, here or elsewhere, suitable pupils, or pupils of any kind, were not to be had. Public feeling is very different now. We have had to jog on with the material available, and, notwithstanding the lack of theological acquirements, have not been disappointed; but it is time a new order of things were introduced, by having a place, with means afforded, and a period allowed, for educating those now anxious to advance in that kind of knowledge which will make them useful members of society. The kind and reasonable proposals made by the Board to supply the wants felt, as well as a medical missionary if deemed necessary, will gratify the brethren."

It is interesting to observe that the promised supplies had reference, among other places, to one (Loghagheng) not far from the station which formerly enjoyed the benefit of Dr. Livingstone's labours, and where Mr. Price was able to report, that, in little more than two years, he had to pay Moffat the sum of fifty pounds for books which had been sold to the natives.

The death of Moselekatze, the chief who ruled the Matebele tribe as with a rod of iron, gave occasion for reference to the moral influence exerted by Mr. Moffat. Eight years had elapsed since the veteran missionary sought for his brethren the protection of the old tyrant. At last death laid low the warlike obstructor of the Gospel. "He

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died," wrote Mr. W. Sykes to the Directors, "on Sabbath afternoon, the 6th of September last, at a village about fifty miles south from Inyati, called Ingama. For months he had been in a lingering state, yet sometimes it was hoped he would rally for another season. My last visit to him was in June—a sad and painful one. I shall never forget how he looked at me, and how affectionately he said, with a feeble, stammering voice, 'I am very ill.' I endeavoured to comfort him; but the only words that seemed to create any interest in his mind, were those of a message from Moffat, saying that he was still praying for him and his people. The moment I uttered the name, his countenance beamed, but he said nothing. I told him intelligence had come that the son of Moffat had been appointed to remain at Kuruman, to comfort his father in his old age; and, with a mien indicating inward disappointment and yet approval, he signified his assent by a gentle nod." When Mr. Sykes was leaving the camp, a voice was raised above the rest, "Remember me to the son of Moffat!" and, as if by an echo, the whole camp repeated the request, while individual voices, still following him, cried out, "All of us! all of us!"

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CHAPTER X.

RETURN TO ENGLAND.

The past and the present—Beneficial results of Missionary labour—Departure of Mr. and Mrs. Moffat from Kuruman—Arrival at Port Elizabeth and the Cape of Good Hope—The work of Bible Translation—Character and prospects of the Matabele—Social changes effected by the Gospel—Arrival in England—Reception at the London Mission House—Mr. Moffat's review of his labours—The Sechuana Version of the Scriptures—A light shining in darkness.

At the commencement of 1870, Mr. Moffat closed his life's labours on the African continent. His own and his loving helpmate's failing health, together with the affectionate solicitations of the Directors of the London Missionary Society, induced him to accept the invitation to return to England. It must have cost no ordinary effort to leave the scene of so many years of unwearied toil, and the people who had learned to respect and revere him. But he had the gratification of witnessing the realization of that faith and hope which had often cheered hmi in the early days of his missionary career. The dark heathenism which enveloped the country on his first entering it has broken and

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lifted before the light of advancing Christianity. Kuruman, itself the creation of his own hands, is now, as it has always been, a bright oasis to every one visiting the far interior. Its gardens and vineyards yield supplies which often recruit the fever-stricken traveller and trader; its church, its schools, its printing-office, its workshops, and its dwellings, all testify to the complete transformation of the community from savage to civilized life. The regions beyond, which before no individual dared to traverse, may now be passed without fear of molestation. European manufactures, to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds, are now annually interchanged with the natives, who previously knew not what commerce was. Above all, among the various tribes of Bechuanas, Bakwaries, Bamanguatos, and others, up to the distant Matabele, a goodly band of earnest, courageous men and women are preaching and living Christianity, setting an example of consistent moral conduct to the savages around, treating them with kindness, and relieving their wants, teaching them agriculture and the simple arts, imparting to them religious instruction, and inculcating the precepts of the Gospel of peace and goodwill.

On leaving the Kuruman, *en route* for England, Mr. and Mrs. Moffat came, by a rough yet safe journey of about eight weeks' duration, to Port Elizabeth. There, on the 20th of May, 1870, they received a hearty welcome from a large number of

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missionaries and other friends, who had come together to meet them. After a brief stay, they embarked in the mail steamer *Roman*, and landed in Cape Town on the 2nd of June. The following day they were entertained by the whole Christian community at a public breakfast; and, after a few days' rest, proceeded towards England in the *Norseman*. Of his overland journey, Mr. Moffat says:—"We had been exposed to cold weather and heavy rains, especially in crossing the snow mountains. From Graaf Reinet to Port Elizabeth, the roads were fearfully bad. We passed many waggons laden with wool brought to a stand up to their axles in mud. We went, however, on our way without accident or loss; for which we desire to feel unfeignedly thankful."

In addressing the company who gathered round him at Port Elizabeth, he thus referred to the accomplishment of his great labours in translation:—"I had hoped that I should be excused as to making a speech, as I am suffering from a cold; but I find it quite impossible to remain silent. I should be a mussel or a cockle, or something of that kind, not to feel impressed with what has been said. I have been reminded of past events, past hours, past days, past years. I have been carried back to past scenes which I can never forget. I still remember distinctly when I first became a missionary, the great undertaking it seemed to be, to learn the language of the people among whom I was placed. There were no

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interpreters to teach us a single word, and the greatest difficulties were thrown in the missionaries' way. However, I laboured on, gathering a few words at a time from one and another, until I could string sentences together, and make my wishes known to the natives. I could make you laugh, as I laughed when I discovered them, at jokes perpetrated towards us by the natives, and amusing things that occurred to us during our inquiries. But I laboured on. During all this time, we had not a friend in the whole nation, not an individual that loved or respected us, or who wished us to remain among them; and, although they tried to drive us out, we persevered, and, by God's grace and assistance, overcame every difficulty. My worthy brother Hamilton was too old to acquire the language, but I, in time, mastered it. How ardently I desired to see the New Testament in Sechuana, that I might read it to the natives, and that they might learn to read it for themselves. I managed, after a time, to translate small portions, and read them to the people in their own tongue. The Mission, I saw, could make no firm footing among them unless the Scriptures were translated. The task of accomplishing this, you can scarcely imagine. When first I came out to Africa, I had not the slightest intention of ever engaging in such a work. I never aimed at being more than a preacher. I was urged, however, by Dr. Philip (whose letters I have still by me), and by others, to persevere in acquiring the language, and to under-

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take the translation of the Scriptures. But I thought it altogether beyond my powers. I wrote to the Directors, that I could not do it, and begged of them to send some one out who could. I felt that I had not sat long enough at the feet of any Gamaliel to qualify me. I then heard that my brother-in-law had been ordained to the ministry, and was to join me; and, as he had received a liberal education, I prepared materials for him to begin with immediately after his arrival; but his destination was altered, he was sent to the East Indies. I wrote again to the Directors, telling them that if they did not send out some one to translate the Scriptures, I should return home. By and by Mr. Robson came out, as I thought, for the work; but he remained here in the colony. After this, I also visited the colony, and met brother Elliott, now gone to heaven. He, I hoped, might be allowed us; but that was inconvenient. At last I brought myself to the resolution, that, if no one else would, I would undertake it myself. I entered heartily upon the work. For many years I had no leisure, every spare moment being devoted to translating, and I became a stranger even in my own family. There was labour every day; for back, for hands, for head. This was especially the case during the time Mr. Edwards was there; our condition was almost one of slavery. Still the work advanced; and, at length, I had the satisfaction of completing the New Testament. Of this, six thousand copies were printed by the Home Society. The whole

were soon distributed, and found insufficient. When Dr. Livingstone came, he urged me to begin at once with the Old Testament. That was a most stupendous work. Before taking it in hand, I passed many sleepless nights. Since, however, it was the wish of all that I should undertake it, I did so, and went on from time to time as I had leisure, daily and nightly. I stuck to it as far as to the end of Kings, when I became completely done up. The Directors were themselves afraid that I was killing myself. I was advised to go home, to leave the work; but I decided otherwise. I determined, on the contrary, to look up Moselekatze, and went off in company with a son of brother Edwards. By the time I had found the chief, I was all right again. Coming back, I resumed my work, and have continued it to completion. And now I can look forward to the Word of God being read by thousands of Bechuanas in their own mother-tongue."

From the chief work of his life, Mr. Moffat recurred to the general progress made in the interior, especially among the Matabele. "Christianity," he said, "has already accomplished much. When first I went to the Kuruman, scarcely an individual could go beyond. Now they travel in safety as far as the Zambesi. Then we were strangers, and they could not understand us. We were treated with indignity, as the outcasts of society, who, driven from among our own race, took refuge with them. But, bearing in remembrance what our Saviour

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underwent, we persevered, and much success has rewarded our efforts. Now it is safe to traverse any part of the country, and traders travel far beyond Kuruman without fear of molestation. Formerly, men of one native tribe could not travel through another's territory, and wars were frequent. Where one station was scarcely tolerated, there are several. The Moravians have their missionaries; the Berlin Society, theirs. Others, too, are occupied in the good work; besides many native Gospel teachers. Very prosperous is our advanced station at the Matabele, who, I quite expect, will one day become a great nation. They sternly obey their own laws; and I have noticed, that, when men of fixed principles become convinced of the truth of Christianity, they hold firmly to the faith, and are not lightly shaken."

Recurring more at large to the difficulties encountered at the outset, Mr. Moffat enumerated gratifying proofs that many of them have been overcome:—"For many years," he said, "they saw not the conversion of a single individual; for years again, they had only one; but, by the blessing of God on great exertion, almost wherever they went, they would now meet with companies of natives who professed to be members of the Church of Christ. Not very long since, it was considered dangerous to travel in the interior; in fact, half a dozen miles from the station. Now, he was happy to say, the natives could be depended upon, and it

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was quite common for traders to travel through their midst, without the least fear of plunder or interruption. In former times, traders were often basely murdered, or, at best, not permitted to return. Now all fears had been dispelled. Once the natives would not buy anything, not even a pocket-handkerchief. They might now and then be induced to buy a few trinkets, or some beads, but nothing of a substantial or useful character. It was not so now. No less than sixty thousand pounds' worth of British manufactures passed yearly into the hands of the native tribes round about Kuruman. Travellers could now go to any of those parts, and be sure that none of the native tribes would harm them; and murders, formerly quite common, were rarely heard of. During his early mission life, he often heard of men of one tribe going to trade with another, and being murdered. He was at a native place when a thing of that sort once occurred. A party of men had come 200 miles to dispose of some articles. The resident natives, taking a dislike to them, set upon them and killed two of the number. He asked them why they had done this, and tried to show them that it was wrong. They seemed to know that; and, from that time, he had never heard of anything of the sort. They were now always ready to meet any traders or other persons. Companies of natives could be passed through without fear, and they showed special respect to the missionaries. He assured the gentlemen present, that many natives

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at the Kuruman were well able to discuss and argue upon the doctrines of Christ. He did not mean, that they could enter into any lengthy or out-of-the way points; but this he would say, that they could argue with sense upon any general question. They might not always stick to a text; but they would rarely go outside of the Bible. And these were a people who, forty years ago, were nothing better than savages; but who, by the blessing of God upon the labours of those who devoted their lives to the work, had been brought to be intelligent disciples of the Gospel of Christ."

Mr. and Mrs. Moffat arrived at Southampton in the steamship *Norseman* on the 25th July, 1870; and on Monday, August 1st, at the Board-room of the London Mission House in Blomfield Street, the veteran missionary was received, on his return, by the Directors of the Society. Mr. James Hawkins, late an English Judge in India, and Chairman of the Board, presided, and nearly a hundred Directors and friends were present. After devotional exercises, the Rev. Dr. Mullens performed the pleasing duty of introduction.

Mr. Moffat then rose, amid enthusiastic applause. "Friends and Brethren," he said, "I have been listening with great attention, and occasionally with very deep feeling, to the words which have been spoken, and which have deeply impressed me. I have felt their weight; but, alas! it is not for me on the present occasion to meet the expectations of

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some with regard to saying a word or two for myself. I am unpleasantly situated. The night before last, I had scarcely any sleep, and last night I had none; and, at the present time, I feel my head 'like an empty calabash,' as we say in Africa. It is not very seasonable to give anything like an address; but a few words I will speak—I cannot help speaking. It was not my expectation to be here; it was not my intention again to visit England. When I last left the Board of Directors, it was, in thought, for ever. Never did it enter my mind that I should set my feet on English soil again. But it has been ordered otherwise. Even on the first occasion when I came home, it was not a matter of choice. When I went out, I went out for life. When I gave myself to the missionary enterprise, it was to live and die in the service. I always anticipated I should leave my dust to mingle with those whom I have been instrumental in gathering from among the heathen, and who are now participating in the glories of the heavenly world. When I came to the Cape, previous to my first visit, I brought a translation of the New Testament, which I had accomplished under considerable difficulties; being engaged a portion of the day in roofing an immense church, and the remainder in exegetical examinations and consulting concordances. I was anxious to get it printed, and I brought it down to the Cape; but there I could find no printing-office that would undertake it. The Committee of the Bible

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Society very kindly—as they have always been to me; I say it with pleasure—forwarded paper and ink to the Cape, expecting I should get the work done there. As I said, there was not a printing-office that would undertake it. Dining with Sir George Napier, the Governor, I informed him of the difficulty. He said, 'Jump on board a ship with your translation, and get it printed in England; and you will be back again while they are thinking about it here. Print a New Testament among a set of Dutch printers! why, I can't even get my proclamations printed.' I said, 'I have become too barbarous; I have almost forgotten my own language; I should be frightened to go there.' 'Oh, stuff!' he said. Some time after he met me in the street: 'Well, Moffat, what have you determined upon?' 'I am waiting the return of Dr. Philip.' 'Don't wait for anybody; just jump on board a ship. Think of the importance of getting the New Testament put in print in a new language.' He invited me to dinner again, and said, 'Have you come to a conclusion? I wish I could give you mine. I feel some interest in the extension of the knowledge of the Word of God. Take nobody's advice, but jump on board a ship for England.' He spoke so seriously that I began to feel serious myself. Dr. Philip came; and, when the circumstances were explained, he said, 'Go, by all means.' I was nervous at the thought. I was not a nervous man in Africa; I could sleep and hear a lion roar. There seemed so

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many great folks to meet with. I came to England, and by and by I got over it. I am afraid I have got too old to improve now. On this second occasion, there was a necessity. I was a martyr to wakefulness; I was dying by inches. Nothing could induce sleep; no matter what kind of opiates I employed. A week would pass without a moment's sleep; a month perhaps, with very short intervals. I was a wonder not only to myself, but to others. Occasionally I got a little sleep; but that was only the prelude to no sleep at all for a long period. I thought of taking a journey into the interior; but, after further consultation, I at last came to the conclusion to go home, and saw my path in that direction clear. I was aware I should be received, and verily I have been received, with kindness passing description. I came to Port Elizabeth, and really the people did not seem to know how they could do enough to express their feelings. I thought I was a solitary missionary, and I should just pass by; but they took all out of me they could find in me, and I believe their kind reception had a very salutary influence upon me. I came to Cape Town, and there they had everything prepared before I arrived. I received a hearty welcome from all sections of the Church, every one congratulating me and passing encomiums. Some of the speeches were admirable. I only wish they had been taken down. Since coming into this room, I could hardly allow myself to think of the last assembly that I witnessed here. There sat Dr.

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Tidman, and there the other Secretary, Mr. Freeman. There, too, were Mr. Coombs, Mr. Philip, Mr. Arundel, Dr. Waugh, and, last not least, Dr. Henderson, to whose own translations I felt so much indebted. These are all gone; it is depressing to think of it; we are following, and others will follow. But, say they are gone, oh! brethren, the work for which God became man,—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, the first missionary in the world,—what a glorious work in which to be found, whether in life or in death! How it is to go with me, I know not. I shall do all that in me lies for the advancement of the missionary cause. I shall not fail, wherever I am, to use all the means within my power, by presence and word, to advance that great cause to which I have devoted my life. It would have been pleasant just to remain with the people among whom I laboured so long, by whom I am beloved, and whom I love. Oh! that parting was a scene hard to witness without deep emotion. Not only from Christian converts, but from heathen chiefs, did I receive tokens of goodwill. Their amanuenses brought letters deploring my departure, and presents to induce me, not to quit the country, but to remain, promising to give me so much more if I would but remain. It was gratifying to see these tokens, especially from the heathen, and those able to appreciate one's labours among them. One sent an ox, another a caross, and so on; a lady of quality sent me four feathers. Some of them asked how

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they were to live, how they were to exist, if I went out of the country; that is a form of expression among them. It is consolatory to think that the influence of the Gospel in that dark benighted country is spreading, and is going into the interior, covering hamlet after hamlet, until its advance, let us be assured, will cover the whole land. It is for us to pray and to labour, and we have the assurance that Ethiopia shall yet stretch out her hands unto God. I feel exceedingly grateful to my friends for the kind way in which I have been received; and in my secret hours I will return thanks to God for all these tokens of friendship, of which I have been the recipient this day."

On a review of fifty-two years' labour, the venerable missionary finds, instead of a solitary station, a number of central stations extending more than three hundred miles beyond the Kuruman, not to speak of what Livingstone has done on the banks of the Zambesi; and, instead of a race of illiterate savages, such as he found at the commencement of his missionary work, a people appreciating and cultivating the arts and habits of civilized life, with a written language of their own, in which may now be read the Holy Book of God. We call to mind the day when he used to say to himself, "If I could but see the Scriptures in Sechuana, I should sing the song of Simeon;" and here he is among us to oversee the printing of a complete version, entirely his own. With respect to the tribes speaking that language,

he has confidence in God, that they will be exempted, by moral influences taking root among them, from the extermination which has overtaken, or is overtaking, others who have disappeared, or are disappearing, before the march of white men who seek not them but theirs.

It has been observed with what sentiments the veteran reviews the great public interests which it has been the labour of his life to foster and promote. Into his private feelings it behoves us, while yet he remains among us, to look, if at all, with respectful reserve. What, however, has been permitted to transpire through the pages of one of the denominational periodicals authorised by the Congregational Union, it cannot be deemed intrusive to repeat. "My dear partner and I," he observes in a letter which appeared in the *Christian's Penny Magazine* for 1869, "have passed over threescore years and fourteen; and, though the spirit is as willing as ever to pursue, the earthly tabernacle fails to follow its dictates with its wonted alacrity. I am still strong, but my power of mind is giving way; memory is beginning to fail, and wakefulness is my malady. I ought not, however, to complain, for I have witnessed a great transformation through the power of the Gospel. One need only see our congregations to be convinced. Thousands of pounds' worth of British goods are yearly brought to this one station only, on which are two well-conducted shops that supply the country for hun-

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dreds of miles round. Books in the language are continually being bought; and it is impossible for me to express the gratitude we feel to the British and Foreign Bible Society for enabling us to place the precious Volume of Inspiration in the hands of the natives."

"No book," says the learned Seiler, "has conduced more than the Bible to the high cultivation and moral advancement of the human mind." No evidence can be produced that the whole of the Scriptures was, by any one person, rendered into Saxon. Even Wickliffe had the help of many predecessors; much more, Coverdale. Bede was translating the Gospel of John at the time of his decease. But Robert Moffat, who began with the Gospel of Luke, has lived to translate the whole Bible into the barbarous dialect of South Africa, and will live, we trust, to see it circulating among the natives who both speak, and, in many instances, can read it. No English Bible was *printed* till 1526, from the present Authorised Version, till 1611; but the Sechuana Bible, it may be hoped, will be in print before 1873.

Carefully as it has been prepared, it may not be free from minor mistakes. Though king's printers and learned universities have had the exclusive care of the English Bible, yet, even as late as the second decade of the present century, one of the editions thus superintended made St. Paul enjoin upon the Corinthians to "let all *tongues*

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be done decently and in order"! This, no doubt, is a condition incident to all human works. The infallible Book is most liable to the errors of fallible men; but, if this allowance must be made for the works of the most learned, in languages most grammatical and best known to scholars, what allowance ought not to be made for missionaries who make no pretensions to scholarship, and who deal with tongues unknown to pen or press? For this reason, among others, to use the language of an eloquent writer before quoted, "when the names of warriors are forgotten in Africa, or remembered only to be execrated, those of Van der Kemp, Philip, Moffat, will live from age to age, engraved in the heart of ransomed nations." But the most immortal of the three will be that of Robert Moffat, who equalled the others as a missionary, a philanthropist, and a civilizer, adding, above all, the whole Word of God in the mother's-tongue of those to whom he ministered, and almost every word of it from his own mind and indefatigable pen.

"The vast importance of having the Scriptures in the language of the natives," as he has himself observed, "will be seen when we look on the scattered towns and hamlets which stud the interior, over which one language, with slight variations, is spoken as far as the Equator. When taught to read, they have in their hands the means, not only of recovering them from their natural darkness, but of keeping the lamp of life burning even amidst com-

paratively desert gloom. In one of my early journeys with some of my companions, we came to a heathen village on the banks of the Orange River, between Namaqua-land and the Griqua country. We had travelled far, and were hungry, thirsty, and fatigued. From the fear of being exposed to lions, we preferred remaining at the village to proceeding during the night. The people at the village rather roughly directed us to halt at a distance. We asked water, but they would not supply it. I offered the three or four buttons which still remained on my jacket for a little milk; this also was refused. We had the prospect of another hungry night at a distance from water, though within sight of the river. We found it difficult to reconcile ourselves to our lot; for, in addition to repeated rebuffs, the manner of the villagers excited suspicion. When twilight drew on, a woman approached from the height beyond which the village lay. She bore on her head a bundle of wood, and had a vessel of milk in her hand. The latter, without opening her lips, she handed to us, laid down the wood, and returned to the village. A second time she approached, with a cooking vessel on her head, and a leg of mutton in one hand and water in the other. She sat down without saying a word, prepared the fire, and put on the meat. We asked her again and again who she was. She remained silent till affectionately entreated to give us a reason for such unlooked-for kindness to strangers. The solitary tear stole down

her sable cheek, when she replied, "I love Him whose servants ye are, and surely it is my duty to give you a cup of cold water in His name. My heart is full, therefore I cannot speak the joy I feel to see you in this out-of-the-world place." On learning a little of her history, and that she was a solitary light burning in a dark place, I asked her how she kept up the life of God in her soul in the entire absence of the communion of saints. She drew from her bosom a copy of the Dutch New Testament, which she had received from Mr. Helm when in his school some years previous, before she had been compelled by her connexions to retire to her present seclusion. "This," she said, "is the fountain whence I drink; this is the oil which makes my lamp burn." I looked on the precious relic, printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the reader may conceive how I felt, and my believing companions with me, when we met with this disciple, and mingled our sympathies and prayers together at the throne of our heavenly Father. GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TO MEN!"

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In Memoriam.

MARY MOFFAT.

DIED 10TH JANUARY, 1871.

Aged 76 years.

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DEATH OF MRS. MOFFAT.

WHILE the last sheets of this work have been passing through the press, it has pleased God to remove by death the loving and faithful companion of Mr. Moffat during upwards of fifty years of his missionary labours in Africa. After a few days' illness, ending in bronchitis, occasioned by the unusually severe winter acting upon a constitution already enfeebled by long residence in the burning climate of South Africa, on the morning of Tuesday, January 10th, 1871, Mrs. Moffat gently and peacefully breathed her last.

The following passage from the *Missionary Chronicle* of February, 1871, gives a brief but faithful sketch of her life and character:—"Mrs. Moffat arrived in Cape Town, and was married to the Rev. Robert Moffat, in 1819; and henceforth, for fifty-one years, she was a sharer of all the toil, the sorrow, and the joy of her devoted husband. Her object was to live for him, that he might be wholly free to live for the tribes around. None looked upon the dark races with a more compassionate eye—none more tenderly yearned over them in their ignorance, or more truly longed for the day of their redemp-

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tion. During the last few weeks of her life, night and day, her soul was full of the thought that a new edition of the whole Sechuana Bible is to be printed in London; and she contemplated with intense satisfaction the prospect of its wide circulation among the tribes, who seemed to have wakened up anew to appreciate it. The loss to Mr. Moffat of one who was his beloved companion, not only for so many years, but in circumstances which made them all-in-all to each other, is unspeakably great."

The funeral took place at Norwood Cemetery, London, on Saturday, January 14th; and it testified, in a striking manner, to the high regard in which Mrs. Moffat was held, and to the deep sympathy felt for her sorrowing husband and family. Several of the leading ministers of the City, a deputation from the Directors of the London Missionary Society, and a large concourse of friends, gathered around the grave. The day was fine and bright, and the brilliant sunshine and blue sky seemed fitting emblems of the joy and triumph with which a consecrated life had passed into the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

The Rev. A. Macmillan conducted the devotional service in the chapel, and offered prayer; in which he returned thanks for those providential steps by which the loved deceased had been guided to become, for so long a time, the counsellor and sustainer of one who had been highly honoured as a messenger of the churches; and for the fortitude, calmness,

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self-possession, gentleness, and self-denial, which she had evinced in high places, and amid the children of God gathered out of heathenism.

The Rev. E. Mannering then gave the Funeral Address. "The end," he said, "has come, the end of a long, devout, useful, very wide-spreading influential life. The end of a simple-hearted believer in the Lord Jesus, the obedient child of God, the willing servant of the churches, the helper of the helpers in the great work of evangelising the heathen, the loving and loved companion of the Heaven-sent earthly messengers, has come. Our dear sister in Christ has been called away. We shall see her face, hear her voice, grasp her hand no more, so far as earthly communions are concerned. Never more will she respond to the call, or yield to the intercessions, or be affected by the influences of social or public life. Her end was not long foreseen; for, till recently, considering her age and the character of her pilgrimage, her health, though not robust, possessed a good deal of *stamina;* but her Saviour permitted the inroads of physical disease, and in a few days she fell asleep."

Mr. Mannering then addressed well-considered words of genuine sympathy for the honoured husband, who, in the bitterness of grief, might well feel that there were points in his case which no human hand could touch, windings in his path which no human foot but his could tread. There were some who talked of loneliness; but what did

they know of the sense of loneliness felt upon the departure of one with whom had been spent full fifty years of diligent, cordial, heart-cheering communion ?

Referring to Mrs. Moffat's devoted life, and the peaceful assurance of her closing days, Mr. Mannering said :—" In 1811, Miss Smith, sister of the Rev. John Smith of Madras, went out to the Cape, and was united to Mr. Moffat ; and from that time forth they had been one in faith, in love, in prayer, in counsel, in efforts for the salvation of souls. Their English loneliness on Afric's soil was indeed social exclusion, but they bore it meekly ; and then it was those two precious souls became so thoroughly one in thought, feeling, purpose, and aim. The wife was as essential to the husband's usefulness as the husband was to the wife's safety. Shortly after her return to England, a Christian friend said to her, 'God has honoured you to be a great helper to your husband.' 'Yes,' she replied ; 'I always studied my husband's comfort, never hindered him in his work, but always did what I could to keep him up to it.' The departure of such a loved companion might well convey to the bereaved husband the idea that he was alone. But that was not so in an absolute sense; for the Lord is with him, the holy angels are with him, and a multitude of all sections of the universal Church are with him in sympathy, and in the desire that his life may be spared to complete the revised edition of the Holy

Scriptures, in which the departed took such a lively interest; so that the people whom she had left might have in their possession those Scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation. The natural shrewdness, cheerfulness, and especially the simplicity of our departed friend, all served, as sanctified by the Spirit, to give point to her religious life and Christian character. Shortly before her death, she declared that she never had a doubt about her safety in Christ from the time she was converted. She knew and felt she was a sinner, and she went to Christ direct; thus retaining the peace she had, every year she became more and more established in faith. This thought was to the surviving husband a precious legacy, much more precious than gold—the conviction that she is now before the throne of God and the Lamb."

The procession having left the chapel for the grave—which is situated in the central portion of the Cemetery—the funeral service was impressively read by the Rev. E. Mannering. The two daughters and the granddaughter of the deceased having then each placed a bunch of white flowers upon the coffin, it was lowered into the grave; and the company dispersed, deeply impressed with the solemnity of the proceedings which had marked the funeral of one whose memory will long be cherished with reverence by all who love that great work to which the life of the departed was so consistently dedicated.

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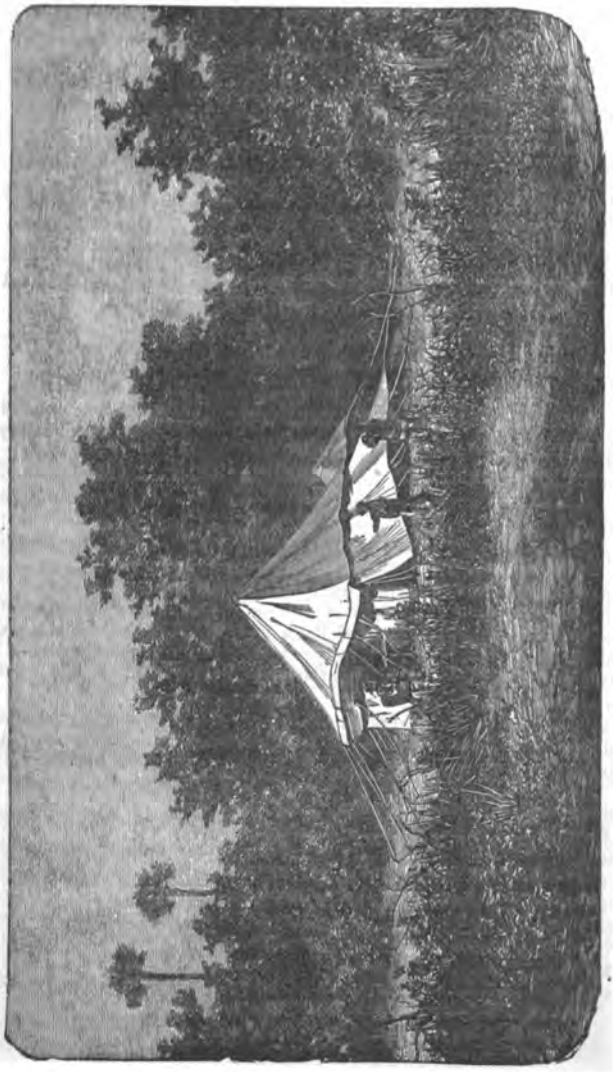

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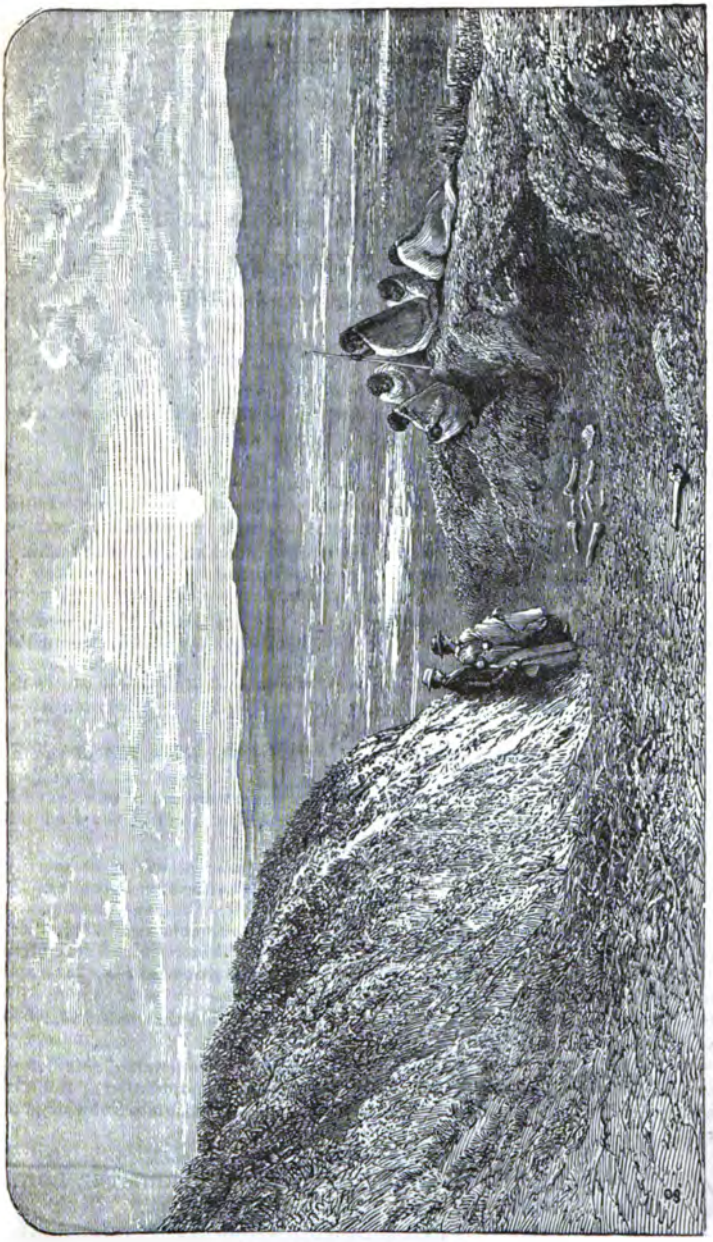

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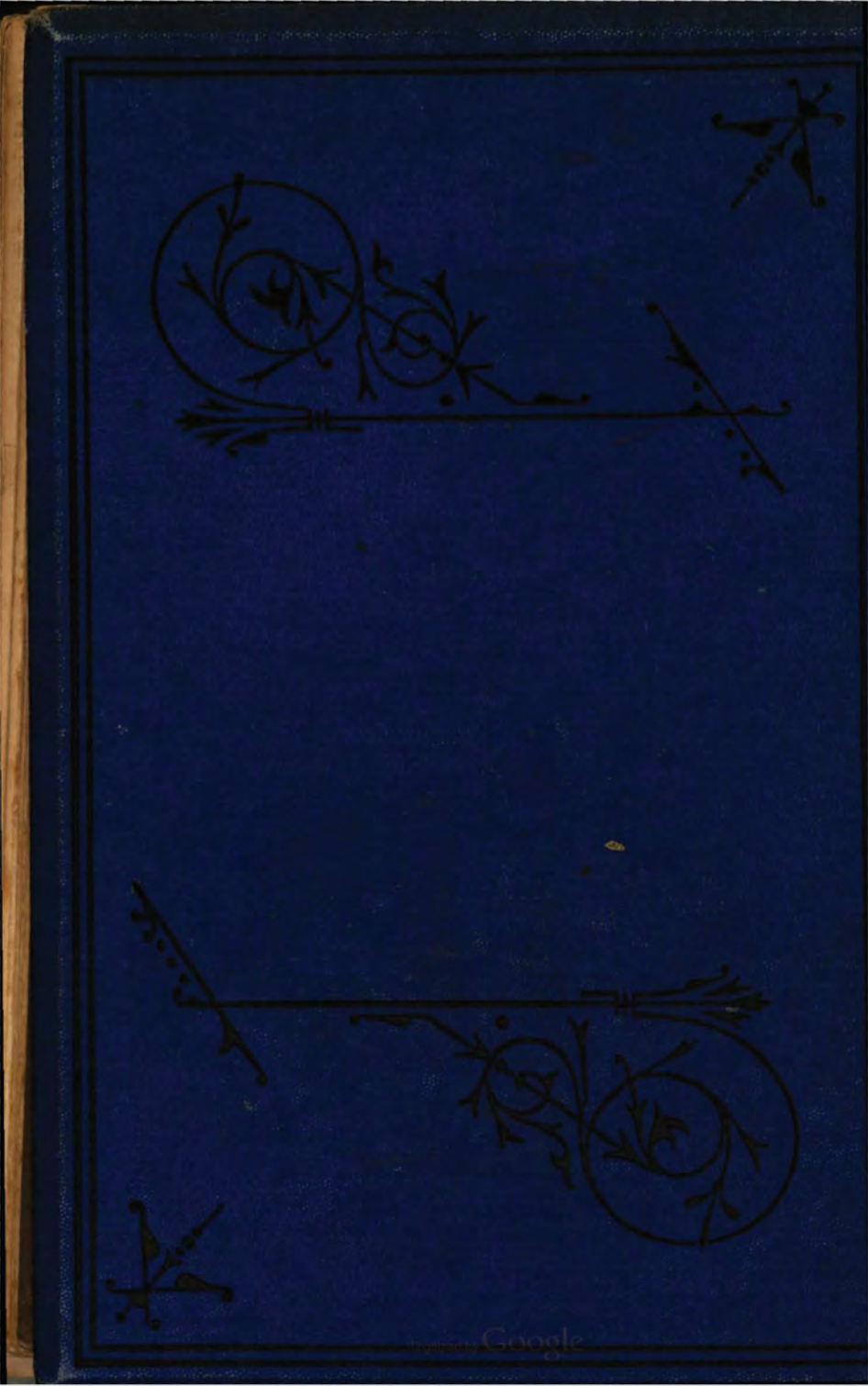
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