PEACE

THE MOTHER OF NATIONS

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THE "SAGA" OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN BASUTOLAND

MOSEBI DAMANE

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EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Mosotho, *a* single individual of the tribe

Basotho, two or more individuals, or the tribe collectively

Sesotho, the language of the Basotho

Lesotho, commonly *Basutoland*, the country belonging to the tribe

Basotho, used also as an adjective signifying pertaining to the people so called

AND A VISION APPEARED TO PAUL IN THE NIGHT; THERE STOOD A MAN OF MACEDONIA AND PRAYED HIM, SAYING, COME OVER TO MACEDONIA AND HELP US. ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 16, VERSE 9.

PROVIDENTIAL LEAD

I

As early as 1799 the London Missionary Society had begun work among the Xhosas of Ngqika in the Colony. But as the Xhosas were indisposed to listen to the Word, the Missionary Dr. Van der Kemp had left Kaffirland and had retired to Graaff-Reinet, where he commenced to instruct the Hottentots in the truths of Christianity.

Later, Missions were founded by the same Society at Kuruman (1817) and Kat River (1816). There were also flourishing mission stations at Griquatown and Philippolis where the wild, savage Griquas had been collected together and had become comparatively wealthy communities, formidable by virtue of the fact that they possessed horses and guns. The Director of the Society in South Africa, Dr. John Philip, was not, however, content with the effort of his own Society and he visited France in 1828 to enlist the sympathy of the newly-formed Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris. In 1831, its three pioneers Samuel Rolland, J. Bisseux, P. Lemue, arrived in Cape Town and they were warmly received by many descendants of the French Huguenots at Wellington. Some of them begged Bisseux to stay with them and teach their Hottentot servants. He remained there till his death in 1897.

Lemue and Rolland went still farther to the North and established a mission station among the Bahurutsi at Motito in Bechuanaland, eighteen miles away from Kuruman. Motito is, therefore, the first mission station of the Protestant Church of France, in South Africa.

Meantime two clergymen, Eugène Casalis, Thomas Arbousset, and a missionary artisan, C. Gosselin, were on their way to reinforce their brethren in the interior. When they arrived in Cape Town, they learnt of the depredations of the Matebele under Motsilikatse who had let havoc loose on the small tribe of the Bahurutsi under chief Mokatla. Providentially their

steps were directed to Basutoland where the people were ruled by Moshoeshoe, the most able chief this country has ever produced.

For many years the Basotho had been the victim of incessant attacks of the Korannas and the Griquas who infested the whole country along the Orange River. These marauders would have proved no match for the Basotho, had they not been mounted on horses and armed with guns, animals and weapons, very much dreaded by the followers of the Mountain Chief. It was also at this time that the Matebele bands came to Basutoland and although they had suffered a reverse at Thaba-Bosiu which taught them to respect the Basotho, yet they kept the people in a state of constant fear.

While the country was subjected to these raids, accounts were beginning to be told in Basutoland of people called "Missionaries." The Basotho were told of the astonishing effects produced by the missionaries at Philippolis and Griquatown. The missionaries, they were told, were not only kind, but possessed guns superior to those of the Korannas, and had a knowledge of magical charms. Most of the Basotho became anxious, therefore, to obtain a missionary who would impart such valuable knowledge to them. The chief Moshoeshoe sent Basotho messengers with two hundred head of cattle to the Griqua Chief at Philippolis with a request that he might be supplied with a missionary in return. On the way the cattle were seized by a band of Koranna marauders. The circumstance came to the ears of Dr. Philip who was then on a tour of inspection, and it led to one of the most important events in the history of Basutoland: the establishment of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society's missionaries in the country of Moshoeshoe.

When Moshoeshoe was informed by the messengers he had sent to Adam Krotz, that the cattle had been stolen on the way, he sent another herd with a still more urgent message. Although this was also seized on the way, the message reached Cape Town just at the time when the three missionaries landed. Through Dr. Philip's recommendation they turned their attention to

Moshoeshoe's country. Their intention seems to have been to establish a mission station at Dingane's country in Natal. They, however, decided to come to Philippolis to find out whether it would be suitable to establish a mission station in the country of Moshoeshoe. It was at Philippolis that they met one Adam Krotz, a professional hunter of Dutch descent, who residing at this town, had recently arrived from Basutoland. This is the account given by Casalis of what happened when they arrived at Philippolis: "Having learned of our arrival at Philippolis, he (Adam Krotz) came to see us, and told us the following story: "While I was carrying on my hunting at a place 8 days' journey from here, a chief sent two men to beg me to visit him. I took with me as interpreter one of the natives of the country whom I had received on my farm. He conducted me to a mountain where this chief had fixed his residence, and who was for this reason called the Mountain Chief. His true name was Moshoeshoe, son of Mokhachane. He told me that for several years he had been the victim of incessant attacks, by which three-quarters of his subjects had been destroyed or dispersed. He had asked me there to know if I could give him any advice – if I could show him any means of securing peace for the country. I thought at once of the missionaries. I spoke to him about Moffat and about our people. I tried to make him understand the services which such men could render him. The idea of having near him permanently wise men, friends of peace, disposed to do all in their power to aid him in his distress, pleased him greatly. He wanted to have some at once. 'Do you know any, he said to me, 'who would be disposed to come?' I replied that sometimes such men come our way. 'Oh, I beseech you, tell the first you meet to hasten here. I will give them the best possible welcome. I will do everything they advise me to do.' I promised him not to forget his prayer. Shortly after my return home I found that he, doubtful whether I should have the means of fulfilling my promise, had sent me 200 head of cattle, in order that I might procure him in exchange at least one missionary. But they were captured en route by the Korannas."

AND A MAN SHALL BE AS AN HIDING PLACE FROM THE WIND, AND A COVERT FROM THE TEMPEST; AS RIVERS OF WATER IN A DRY PLACE, AS THE SHADOW OF A GREAT ROCK IN A WEARY LAND.

ISAIAH 32, VERSE 2.

THE ARRIVAL IN BASUTOLAND

When they arrived at Philippolis, the missionaries were again clearly told of Moshoeshoe's request, and in the words of one of them, they regarded it as "an unpardonable mistake not to listen to such an appeal." The Chief had been informed that men of peace were coming to Basutoland, and had made arrangements that his sons Letsie and Molapo should meet them at "Khalong-la-bo-Tau" on the 27th June 1833, and conduct them safely to Thaba-Bosiu.

From Modderpoort there is a magnificent view of the Maluti range of Basutoland. In winter some of the higher peaks are tipped with snow, and seem to rise high and white against the grays of the eastern twilight. The whole country is a scene of beauty and loveliness, — a country of rocks, beautiful valleys, and streams, some of which have waterfalls of a "downward smoke" appearance.

But beautiful as the physical features of Basutoland are, they stood in sharp contrast to the heathenism which prevailed in the country then. The religion of the people did not go beyond ancestral worship (balimo). This was practised especially during times of national disasters or family sickness. Witchcraft was deeply rooted in their minds Nearly every village was provided with pegs covered with "medicines" to protect the inhabitants from people of malignant nature. Every house was crowned with medicine sticks to protect it from being struck by lightning during Summer, and on the mountains were to be found these sticks left there by the witchdoctors to ward off hailstones which recur nearly every year in Basutoland.

The chief had sent to "Khalong-la-bo-Tau" his two sons, accompanied by a large number of warriors and witchdoctors, to meet the missionaries. The doctors were to make certain, now and again, that the way of the "harbingers of Peace" to Thaba-Bosiu was not beset with dangers. This they did by throwing their divining bones to the ground and repeating by

heart "maoa" or stories telling what was revealed to them by the position of these bones. Warriors spent the night singing, and praising the deeds of their chiefs in their own extravagant language. Little did the warriors and witchdoctors realise that from that day

> THEY SHALL NO MORE BE A PREY TO THE HEATHEN, NEITHER SHALL THE BEAST OF THE LAND DEVOUR THEM; BUT THEY SHALL DWELL SAFELY, AND NONE SHALL MAKE THEM AFRAID.
>
> EZ. 34, VERSE 28

It was at Modderpoort (Khalong-la-bo-Tau) that the Basotho first saw the three men who were to identify themselves with the people they had come to uplift. – Arbousset, a brilliant student of Greek and Latin, a man of the loftiest character, and a practical man of personal magnetism, Gosselin, an artisan of remarkable character and ability, who was to lay the foundations of the present industrial development of the Basotho, and Casalis, a man of sympathy with the mind of the Basotho, and of literary gifts not only in his own language, but in other languages as well. He was the man who reduced the Sesotho language to a written form, and endowed it partly with the Word.

On the morning of 28th June 1833, the three missionaries were conducted to Thaba-Bosiu, where Moshoeshoe and other principal chiefs of the Basotho were eagerly waiting to receive them. A crowd of people had been posted about a quarter of a mile away from the mountain to meet their benefactors with tuneful welcome. Men and women were dancing and singing with gladness, in strains appropriate to the occasion. They had been told that the missionaries were the messengers of God,

who were sent to stay with them, and among their songs those that referred to "spirits" (balimo) were heard

Slaughter the white oxen,
Yea, slaughter them for the gods.
Slaughter them and see their hearts gladden,
Oh, God, hear us we pray,
Oh, where have the people gone whence they return not?
God, hear us we pray.

Hlabang tse tsoeu, le nee melimo,
Le tle le bone ha melimo e thaba,
Molimo ak'u re utloe rea rapela.
Maakane ho iloe kae,
Ho sa keng ho khutloa re tla bonoa?
Molimo, ak'u re utloe rea rapela.

II

UNDER the shadow of the low-browed Machache lies the flat-topped Thaba-Bosiu, an impregnable fortress, the home of the Basotho chief, Moshoeshoe, and the present burial-place of the chiefs. Though resolutely attacked in later years by various enemies, white and black, Thaba-Bosiu has never been wrested from the Basotho chiefs. It has remained their hope, strong, like a light-house in a storm. To the summit of this the missionaries were led, and there received cordially by the Basotho, amidst cheers of "Welcome, white men."

The following illustrates how they were introduced to the chief by Adam Krotz who had accompanied them to Basutoland.

Adam Krotz (to Moshoeshoe): "These are the men whom I promised you, oh chief!

Moshoeshoe: I am very happy that they have come.

Adam Krotz: They shall explain their plans and arrange matters with you.

Missionaries: We have been greatly moved by the description which has been given us of the misfortunes of the Basotho, and their present sad plight. We believe that for all these evils we have a sovereign remedy.

If you, oh chief, and your people consent to place yourselves with us under the care of God, we have the most perfect assurance that He will undertake to make the incursions of your enemies cease, and to create in the country an order of faith and of conduct, which will secure tranquillity, order and abundance.

Moshoeshoe: My heart is white with joy; your words are great and good . . . You see our desolation. This country was full of inhabitants, wars have devastated it. . . . I remain alone on this rock. I have been told that you can help us. You promise to do it. . . . Remain with us. You shall instruct us. The country is at your disposal. We can go through it together, and you shall choose the place which will best suit you."

It is perhaps necessary to give here the character of the man who was to gather under his sceptre, and build without military power, a nation out of clans of different languages, temperament and customs. He is portrayed as "attired in the most fantastic fashion, . . . with a large mantle of panther skins falling carelessly round from his middle. . . . wearing on his right arm a bracelet of ivory—an emblem of power— and some copper rings on his wrists.

His well-developed forehead, the fulness and regularity of his features; his eyes a little weary as it seemed, but full of intelligence and softness filled those who saw him with admiration for him. At the time of the arrival of the missionaries at Thaba-Bosiu; he was about fortyfive years of age.

He was a man of remarkable character and rare qualities of statesmanship. Unlike other African builders of Empire, he alone realised that peace is the "Mother of Nations." Finding war inconsistent with assuring the existence of any State, he adopted the policy of establishing his power through diplomacy rather than through force. It was as if he knew that "they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." "The 'assegai' itself can only kill and destroy."

It is one of Moshoeshoe's highest titles to statesmanship and fame that he invited the missionaries to Basutoland to usher into his country the dawn of a new order of things, a moral and spiritual force which would help uplift the heathen Basotho to the light of day. It was as if he had realised with Otto the Great of Germany that ecclesiastical power in his country "gave to the King a new prestige with other tribes and that it developed national feeling and national pride." Although he waited until his deathbed to adhere to Christianity, he on the whole "understood its social and humanitarian values." To the work the missionaries accomplished for this shrewd chief of the mountain we shall refer later. But here it will be sufficient to hear the views of one of the Resident Commissioners of this territory, Sir Godfrey Lagden, concerning Moshoeshoe's action in introducing the Missionaries to Basutoland.

"How his far-sightedness and sound reasoning were justified, appeared later on, when the influence of resident missionaries was successfully exerted in complicated matters of state, involving negotiations with the British and Boer governments which had to be conducted on behalf of the Basotho by means of letters, petitions, and personal conferences."

GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS. . . . TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD.

MATTHEW 28, VERSE 19, 20.

FOUNDATION OF MISSION STATIONS IN BASUTOLAND (1833 – 1859)

I

THE magnificent Thaba-Telle one of the most remarkable peaks of the Maluti, lifted up its head high above the other hills at a distance of about 20 miles in a south-easterly direction from Thaba-Bosiu. Not far from it the smooth-flowing Lerato meandering through the lovely and charming scenery, drew its sweet waters. From the flanks of Makhoarane numerous streams flowed through groves of trees and shrubs covering the sides of the mountain to join this serpentine rivulet. Here at the entrance of the valley made by the river, extending between the high plateau of Makhoarane and the isolated mountain of Masite was to flourish the first mission station, Morija, established by the three missionaries.

The name Morija is of biblical origin, connected with the occasion when Abraham's faith was sorely tried. The missionaries, remembering the difficulties through which they had passed and the providential guidance which had brought them thus far, gave to this locality the name Moriah, now called "Morija". "Never did a mission begin under happier auspices," says Miss Mackintosh. . . . "The climate was admirable, the scenery lovely, the soil fertile, building materials and labour abundant. The Gospel was preached, the people were taught building and improved methods of agriculture, to sow wheat, to plant trees, and vegetables."

It was on the 9th July 1833 when, after a long search, their choice was finally fastened on this spot. Moshoeshoe himself had accompanied them to this place, and the chief, profiting by the slowness of their march from Thaba-Bosiu, had brought down for them a good many specimens of big game. In throwing the javelin he showed a good deal of astonishing precision and power. At the time Morija was close to the southern boundary

of the country "de facto" ruled by Moshoeshoe, but the rapid extension of his people towards the south converted it into the geographical centre of Basutoland. The two sons of Moshoeshoe, Letsie and Molapo were established at Morija together with their companions under the direction of the missionaries, probably with the twofold object of giving them the advantage of education which they would receive from the missionaries, and of placing them between him and the marauding Korannas who made incessant raids against him and had recently attacked him in his fortress at Thaba-Bosiu.

Moshoeshoe himself had promised to reside at Morija. It would appear as if he later noticed the disadvantage of abandoning his stronghold of Thaba-Bosiu for a spot unprotected by nature and consequently less safe. The missionaries, therefore, had with them a colony of young men whose character was often open to new ideas necessary for the establishment of the christian faith which their benefactors wished for their converts. Nor did they find these young men devoid of the finer qualities which Europeans possess. Theirs was to develop these qualities and to bring the Basotho to know the Gospel.

The success and the means by which it was achieved was described in a letter written by Rev. E. Casalis to France on the 3rd Sept. 1838. "As soon as these intimate relations between the missionaries and the natives have been established, everything becomes simple and easy. The Mosotho no more keeps secrets from one whom he sees smiling at his children and sleeping peacefully at his side; and the missionary, in turn, finds pleasure in the society of his new acquaintances."

The first convert was baptized on the 18th August 1839. In 1840 the first wife of Molapo, Moshoeshoe's son, was converted together with her husband Molapo who took the name of Jeremia. Later David Masopha, the fourth son of the chief, and Pauluse Matete one of Moshoeshoe's chief counsellors were baptized after conversion. Moshoeshoe's sons and counsellors having become christians, it looked as if the chief himself would accept christianity.

AND THEY WENT FORTH AND PREACHED EVERYWHERE, THE LORD WORKING WITH THEM, AND CONFIRMING THE WORD, WITH THE SIGNS FOLLOWING. MARK 16, VERSE 20.

II

WHEN the missionaries perceived that Moshoeshoe had abandoned the idea of leaving Thaba-Bosiu, they decided to found a mission station at the great place. Casalis was chosen to fill the important position of resident missionary at the new station, which was to be founded at the foot of the mountain of Moshoeshoe, and in 1838 he moved into the house which though enlarged and altered, is fundamentally still the same to-day as it was then. Casalis was admirably suited for such a difficult post. He was gentle, firm, prudent and sure to exercise a great influence on Moshoeshoe.

Upon the arrival of the missionary at Thaba-Bosiu, a large "pitso" was convened by the chief, in which he exhorted the assembled chiefs and people to embrace Christianity, and believe where they "cannot prove."

"You say you will not believe what you do not understand. Look at an egg. If a man breaks it, there comes only water and a yellow substance out of it. But if it be put under the wings of a hen, there comes a living thing from it. This is incomprehensible to us, yet we do not deny the fact. Let us do like the hen. Let us place these truths in our hearts, as the hen does the egg under her wings, let us sit upon them and take the same pains, and something new will come out of them."

The initial success of the work of Mr. Casalis at Thaba-Bosiu is best illustrated by the fact that one of the best known counsellors of Moshoeshoe, Ramatseatsana became a convert. This action provoked the anger of the old Mokhachane, Moshoeshoe's father, and some of the chief counsellors who were against the idea of the Basuto accepting the Gospel with its influence which they thought effeminates and enervates.

Mokhachane was a remarkable character. He is described as "a dry old man with a cynical look, abrupt and brief in speech. . . . Sugar was the only good thing, in his opinion, the missionaries had brought into his country. . . . At bottom he was more roguish than wicked. Surrounded by people extremely supersti-

tious, he lent himself to their practices, but not without rendering himself guilty of many profanations. In paying diviners for instance, he did not hesitate to tell them that he regarded them as the biggest impostors in the world. He was in truth a singular personage. Suspicious, mocking, a thorough egotist, he despised men and did not conceal the fact."

He made a determined effort to dissuade Moshoeshoe's sons and other converts from encouraging the mass of the nation by their example to undermine the old Basotho customs and traditions in accepting the contemptible "Gospel of the white man." At one time it appeared as if he had won Moshoeshoe to his side. In 1840 a large "pitso" was convened at Thaba-Bosiu to decide the fate of Christianity in Basutoland. The old chief went to the extent of demanding the death of Ramatseatsana and a few other converts. The danger was only averted by Moshoeshoe's openly siding with the Christians.

The incident, however, made him realise that, in the event of his being converted, the forces of heathenism would refuse to follow him, and consequently he would lose his influence upon a large number of his subjects. It is sometimes regretted that he did not have the courage to declare himself more frankly in favour of "formal" Christianity. It is declared that, had he adopted this line of action, the history of Basutoland might have taken a different course. But it must be remembered that his rule, like Charlemagne's, had its keynote on personal authority. It differed from Charlemagne's in that it was impossible for him to compel the partisans of heathenism to accept the "odious creed" at the point of the sword, as the Frankish Emperor did with the untamed, fierce Saxons who attached themselves tenaciously to the heathen faith of their ancestors. He advocated peace.

In spite of fierce opposition, the station at Thaba-Bosiu progressed so rapidly that in 1842 there were already about 49 full members of the church and about 130 catechumens. In 1839 Casalis had translated into Sesotho the Gospel according to St. Mark and by the end of 1843 the rest of the New Testament had been translated.

III

THE year 1836 witnessed the great exodus of the Boers from the Cape Colony to various parts of South Africa. This had far-reaching consequences upon the political and social conditions of Basutoland. As they were passing through Moshoeshoe's territory, they were granted by him permission to graze their cattle on certain parts of the land, but they were warned not to construe this act of kindness as a right. Notwithstanding carefulness on the part of the Basotho chief to avoid receiving any remuneration from them lest they should take advantage of it, they sold, without his permission, farming places and fountains among themselves, and this fact grieved him.

He asked his missionary to address an appeal on his behalf to the British Government for friendly relations. "The appeal . . . is an historical document of great interest as being the herald of negotiations leading up to the introduction of British rule in Basutoland." It is as follows : –

TRANSLATION

Thaba-Bosiu,
30th May, 1842

His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor,

Moshoeshoe, Chief of the Basuto tribe begs me to write on his behalf and inform your Excellency of his desire for closer relations with the Colonial Government.

He has observed with great interest the development of the generous system adopted by the English nation towards the tribes with which her territorial expansion has brought her into contact. He is more and more convinced that there is no existence and independence possible but under the protection of the Sovereign whose representative you are.

He, therefore, requests your Excellency to take up his interests and to let him know whether you would favour the official recognition of the Basuto tribe ; he also would like to be informed of the nature and basis of the treaty which you would deem best

suited to the needs of the said tribe and to the interests of the Colony.

I remain, Your Excellency,
With most profound respect,
Your humble servant,
(For Chief Moshoeshoe)
E. Casalis, V. D. M.
(Missionary in the service of the
Paris Evangelical Missionary Society)

This prayer was accompanied by memorials signed by the French missionaries, Rolland, Arbousset and others, who took pains to explain all the facts and the danger of allowing the Boers to adopt a hostile attitude towards the Native tribes beyond the Orange River.

Consequently, Her Majesty's Governor of the Cape Colony entered upon a treaty with Moshoeshoe, recognising him as the chief of the whole territory between the Orange and the Caledon Rivers. "It is in connection with the treaty with Sir George Napier that the political role of the French missionaries began."

This fact can fully be realised when one peruses the collection of diplomatic correspondence compiled by Dr. Theal under the title of "Basutoland Records." In these Records numerous documents concerning the Basotho have been signed by M. Casalis and his colleagues.

IV

IN 1842 two ordained missionaries from Europe arrived in Basutoland. They were Ch. Schrumpf and J. Maitin. Their presence made the foundation of new mission stations possible

On the banks of the river Maphutseng in the district of Moorosi, the chief of the Baphuthi clan, a friend and vassal of Moshesh, the station of Bethesda was founded in 1843 with Schrumpf as resident missionary. The Baphuthi are not of the same origin as the rest of the Basotho. Speaking various languages at first, they were later amalgamated by one Mokuoane, Moorosi's father. His son, Moorosi put himself together with his people under the protection of Moshoeshoe, and acted on several occasions "*as a messenger*" of Moshoeshoe's "words of peace and goodwill" to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Cape.

Four years after the foundation of the mission station among his people, Moorosi, leaving his missionary behind, crossed the Orange to Tulumaneng, an impregnable fortress near the confluence of the rivers Senqu (Orange) and Tele.

This action has had the influence of leading many people to the conclusion that he was unfriendly to the missionaries and the Gospel. His conduct whilst at Maphutseng, however, appears to disprove this assertion. To protect his missionary from the thieving propensities of the Bushmen who had more than once driven oxen belonging to him to their mountain fastnesses, he ordered one of his chief counsellors, Ranthake, to reside near the mission station, and encouraged him to become a convert. Ranthake and one Simon Toeba were the first converts at Bethesda and they became staunch members of the church later at Masitise, one of the most important mission stations in the present district of Quthing.

Another station was also founded at Berea by Maitin in 1843.

In 1846 Molapo, the second son of Moshoeshoe, was given the country to the north of Thaba-Bosiu to occupy, by his father. As he was a convert he was eager that a missionary should be

placed in his new district. Although this was not possible at the time, the arrival of Keck from Europe led to the foundation of a mission station at a place called Mechotloho. This was the first mission station in upper Basutoland.

Some of the inhabitants of Mechotloho had once been cannibals during the desperation caused by the devastating armies of the Zulus, when some people, threatened by hunger, had to resort to eating human flesh. It was, therefore, a very difficult task for the missionaries to try to raise the moral standard of people who had once descended to such depths of degradation. Moreover, Molapo himself had now changed his attitude towards Christianity. He seemed to have a double personality. On Sundays and other occasions he would eloquently exhort his people to be converted, but all the while he was carrying on a systematic persecution of the Christians. He had, strangely, become an irretrievable apostate. This is what he said himself to his missionary in later years.

"You ought to know what the apostle says : 'It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance ?' So to-day, you see, if I listen to the word of God, it is only with the ears of the head ; my heart, no, that hears them no more. I like "thuto" (preaching) I like you. . . . but that is all."

He was now, after tasting the sweetness and beauty and loveliness of the name of Jesus, returning like a sow to her "wallowing in the mire."

In the face of all opposition the little station rapidly progressed. Keck had given it the new name Cana, with a firm hope that, just as Christ had glorified His name in this little town of Galilee when He changed water into wine, so here would He glorify His Name and calm the evil passions of these people with the words : "Peace, be still."

Up to the year 1847 the mission had been expanding more or less peacefully. But henceforth the missionaries pursued their work under different circumstances, amidst wars and political upheavals, and had to take into account the opposition of a large section of the tribe.

V

IN 1847 Sir Harry Smith became the Governor of the Cape Colony and Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, and at the request of Moshoeshoe and some emigrant farmers, he came to Winburg and proclaimed the Sovereignty of Queen Victoria up to the 25° latitude. Upon his departure some forces of discord under Andries Pretorius rebelled against British Authority, but they were speedily defeated by Smith at a place called Boomplaats, on the 29th August 1848.

Throughout all this Moshoeshoe had proved himself a friend of the British Government. The Governor also had shown much admiration for the Basotho chief and his young missionary, and he had even gone to the extent of exerting his influence to help Casalis to convert the mountain Chief. On the 28th May, 1848, he wrote to him as follows:—

"I have only one ardent wish to express to you—that you will provide for the future blessed state of your immortal soul, and that you will become a convert to the Christian Faith, and worship Almighty and Omnipotent God, through his Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Apply, therefore, to your excellent missionary who will explain to you how all good men will meet again hereafter in Heaven and enjoy eternal Bliss.

Your friend,

H. G. Smith."

The chief also expressed his admiration for the christian character of the Governor, and wrote to him in such glowing terms as these:

"Go, Great warrior of your nation, go under the shield of your mighty Jehovah, by whose aid you tell me you have been able to do such things in this country.

Go, Great Leader of the soldiers of the Lady your Queen, tell Her Gracious Majesty in my name, that I love Her Government, I love Her Warriors, whose deeds of valour have filled me with wonder."

Later, however, the Governor, feeling that the power of Moshoeshoe was becoming too great, adopted the maxim: "*Divide et impera.*" He sought to counter-balance it by treating Sekonyela, the chief of the Batlokoa clan, and other chiefs as independent rulers, and the object of his favour. Henceforth the old chief lost all confidence in the good faith of the British Government. His sons, from a sense of desperation plundered their neighbours, who naturally appealed to the Governor for the protection which he had promised them. The Governor gave instructions to the British Resident in Bloemfontein to "humble the arrogant Basotho Chief who will not humble himself." An army consisting of about 120 Cape Mounted Rifles and a rabble of Batlokoa and Barolong advanced into Basutoland, and they were met at Viervoet Mountain and were driven over precipices by 80,000 Basotho warriors.

This defeat temporarily destroyed British prestige in the eyes of many people, but on the cause of Christianity in Basutoland it had a far worse effect. Many chiefs who had encouraged and even professed christianity, after the orgies of victory, plunged headlong again into heathenism. The situation can best be understood in a letter written from Morija by Casalis: —

"Political passions have turned the heads of these people and have given them a plausible pretext to revert to their savage customs."

The victorious Basuto were now quite out of control. They burned, destroyed and plundered right and left. The British Government had suffered a humiliating defeat and it was the object of the officials at Cape Town to recover this lost prestige. The new Governor, Sir George Cathcart, had declared that, should he make war upon Moshoeshoe, "it must be on good grounds . . . and then it must not be a small war."

On the 13th Dec. he summoned Moshoeshoe to meet him at Platberg on the Caledon River. The next day, having made up his mind that with an expensive army in the field, a three days' ultimatum was the appropriate solution, he sent it in the form of a letter which rendered any chance of parley hopeless. Mo-

shoeshoe had to give to the Governor within three days 10,000 head of cattle and 1,000 horses.

The Missionary, Maitin, left no stone unturned to persuade the Governor to grant Moshoeshoe sufficient time and thereby avoid a war which might destroy the Basotho and the work of Christianity in their land. But the Governor was led to think that the Basuto could easily pay up within three days, not only the required number, but three times as much.

On the third day only 3,500 head of cattle had been collected, and although Maitin explained to the High Commissioner that real efforts were being made to collect more, all was in vain. On the 19th Dec. orders were given to the troops to cross the Caledon into Basutoland at daybreak on the morning of the 20th. On the same night Maitin crossed the river to the Camp of the Governor to explain to him that although there were considerable herds spread over the country, it was impossible to collect the number required within such a short space of time; but the instructions issued could not be reversed.

On the morning of the 20th Dec., the British troops crossed the Caledon with the intention of marching to Thaba-Bosiu. At Berea, where a sharp engagement took place, the British troops, though vastly outnumbered showed a cool determined stand against overwhelming forces, which fact made a deep impression on the Basuto. Because of their numerical superiority, they had not expected on unbroken line of fire and steel, but a rabble of dismayed fugitives.

Although after the battle Cathcart withdrew, Moshoeshoe was wise enough to see that his army was not a match for even that little band, still less for the enormous reserves that he knew the Governor could bring against him.

During the night after the battle, the chief roused his missionary Casalis and in his presence he ordered Nehemiah, one of his educated sons, to write down these words of inspiration. He should give Cathcart the honours of the day, admit chastisement and defeat. This historic letter is a true manifestation of his diplomacy and a proof of the wisdom of his adviser Casalis.

It saved Britain from a costly war and secured the independence of Basutoland to the present hour.

Thaba Bosiu
"Midnight," 20 Dec. 1852

"Your Excellency,

This day you have fought against my people and taken much cattle. As the object for which you have come is to have a compensation for the Boers, I beg you will be satisfied with what you have taken. I entreat peace from you, – you have shown your power – you have chastised, – let it be enough, I pray you ; and let me be no longer considered an enemy of the Queen. I will try all I can to keep my people in order for the future.

Your humble servant.

(*Signed*) *Moshoeshoe*."

The favourable impression that Sir George Cathcart had of the French missionaries of Basutoland and the esteem he entertained for them is best illustrated in a letter dated the 22nd March 1853. (Basutoland Records, volume II, page 42). He writes as follows : – "Another advantage among many, resulting from my visit to Platberg was that of making the acquaintance of Mr. Casalis and the other gentlemen of the French Missionary Society, who from their conversation, as well as their good works, I have learnt to know, are loyally disposed towards the British Government and sincere well-wishers to and promoters of the cause of peace."

And on the eve of his departure from South Africa he writes to Moshoeshoe as follows : –

"I request you to remember me to Mr. Casalis and the other missionaries, – worthy men, whom you so wisely protect and patronise within your territories, – and assure them of my respect and esteem ; and in all matters of difficulty, or in relation with British Government, or your European neighbours, you cannot have more trustworthy or judicious advisers." (Basutoland Records, volume II, page 105).

VI

IN 1855 Casalis departed from Basutoland and returned to Europe. Of all the French missionaries who ever came to this country, his name, like that of his son-in-law Adolphe Mabille, will remain indelible in the mind of every thinking Mosotho. He is the man who brought the Basotho people and their chief into contact with the British Government, when their interests and their very lives were in jeopardy for want of a person who could read and answer the letters they received from the Government, and state their case in plain English.

He has been suspected by many Europeans and writers of history in this country of wishing to make Moshoeshoe a great man, but to the mind of any man free from prejudice, it is clear that all the communications he wrote in the name of Moshoeshoe were stricly what the Basotho Chief had wished him to express. Moshoeshoe was so high-minded that he could not entrust his affairs blindly to the management of others. He only went to Casalis for counsel, and the missionary was in some respects his Foreign Minister.

Although he held very great authority in Basutoland, yet he only interfered with the customs of the people when they were contrary to Christianity, he did not seek to make Europeans of them.

When he went to France as Director of the Paris Missionary Society, he helped to make the people sympathetic towards the Basotho by publishing in Paris (1855) and in London (1862) his book "The Basutos"—written in a very pleasing style, concerning the habits and customs of the Basotho. In this book, also, we get expressed sincerely the views then adopted by the French missionaries which caused them to be regarded as the champions of the wildest pretensions of Moshoeshoe.

VII

THE extent to which Christianity with its call on men to set their "affection on things above" had influenced the Basotho at this time, is best illustrated by two proclamations fulminated from Thaba-Bosiu by Moshoeshoe against the sale of spirituous liquors, and witchcraft respectively.

(A) *Ordinance against the introduction and sale of spirituous liquors in the territory of the Basotho.*

Whereas the spirituous liquors of the whites were unknown to the former generations of our tribe, Matie and Mohlomi, until Bamonaheng, and our father Mokhachane, now very advanced in age, has never used any other drink than water and milk; and whereas we deem that a good Chief and Judge cannot claim to be competent to execute his duties if he make use of anything of an intoxicating nature; and whereas spirituous liquors create quarelling and strife, and pave the way to the destruction of society, (for surely the spirituous liquors of the whites are nothing else than fire):

It is, therefore, hereby made known to all, that the introduction and sale of the said spirituous liquor within Basutoland is henceforth prohibited, and provided any person, whether white or coloured, contravene this order, the spirits shall be taken from him and poured out on the ground, without excuse or indemnification.

And this order shall be printed in the Basotho and Dutch languages, and posted up at the places of public meetings, and in the villages of the Basotho.

Given with the advice and concurrence of the great men of our tribe, by us the Chief of the Basotho,
at Thaba-Bosiu, the 8th of November 1854.

(*Signed*) *Moshoeshoe, Chief.*

(B) *Proclamation by Moshoeshoe* (Translated by Rev. T. Arbousset)

Thaba-Bosiu, 27th August, 1855.

The word of Moshoeshoe on witchcraft. — I am Moshoeshoe, I write to my people, and say to them : you remember that formerly when any one resorted to the witch, the public heard of it, that it was well known before anything was done, and that one would go far to consult the wizard even to Zululand. . . . Now: When any one is killed in a case of witchcraft, the murderer will be most severely judged, and sentenced to death.

This word is for public information, and will stand as law. . . .

Mark X of Moshoeshoe, Chief of the Basotho.

But just then the clouds of a storm which was soon to burst in fury over Basutoland were gathering on the horizon. The President of the Free State was determined to crush once and and for all the power of "this arrogant nation of thieves", and the culmination of his determination found its full expression in the proclamation dated 19th March 1858, which called "the burghers . . . to do their duty in defence of their rights and for the preservation of the country in the firm reliance that the Almighty will crown their efforts with an honourable and permanent peace."

The invasion of Basutoland had begun. Morija was attacked and Arbousset's house was set on fire, and his property sold by auction. The stronghold of Moshoeshoe was threatened, but the Dutch troops withdrew, leaving ruins and destruction in their train. The stations at Beersheba and Hebron had been sacked and that of Thaba-Bosiu had been attacked. The French missionaries were freely accused of taking part in the fighting, and this slander is even now circulated. After investigating the matter the High Commissioner, Sir George Grey wrote three letters to the Colonial Office, to the French diplomatic agent, and to the President of the Orange Free State, in which he said he felt it was his duty to inform them that these charges had been utterly disproved.

This was the position when the new missionaries from Europe, Adolphe Mabille, D. F. Ellenberger, Paul Germond, Francois Coillard, and others arrived, bringing new methods and new ideas into the life of the Church. Their arrival marks an end to the purely pioneer period of the Mission and ushers in a new period, sponsored by Mabille, when the evangelisation of the tribe was to be carried on to some extent by the Basotho themselves.

Of the three missionaries from Vaud in Switzerland, viz. Mabille, Germond, and Ellenberger, who were to play an important role, each in his particular sphere, the name of Mabille will remain for ever in the memory of all thinking Basotho. He is aptly described by one of his colleagues as "the man whom Providence held in store to urge the Basutoland Mission on towards new horizons." He it was who urged his fellow workers to use the Basotho themselves as pastors to enlighten the darkness which "brooded upon the face" of their country.

Already in 1856 the Conference had decided to establish a Normal School "to form Basotho Schoolmasters and if practicable, Evangelists, where they should also be taught the rudiments of some of the most useful trades and such handicrafts as are likely to advance the civilisation of the people." Hermon, the mission station not far from the present town of Mafeteng, was regarded "as presenting great advantages for the establishment of the Institution." But the declaration of the war already referred to, by the Free State Government on Basutoland rendered temporarily impracticable the realisation of this idea.

Upon his arrival Mabille asked the Conference to open a Central or Normal School and this scheme was accepted in 1864. Coillard was to be the Director of this school, but a few weeks after war broke out, and this forced the mission to wait until better days.

Mabille also encouraged the opening of outstations, which were entrusted to the care of evangelists trained by the missionaries themselves. The first outstation was opened at Kolo, not very far from Morija.

Under his initiative the missionaries, including himself, sharing the work among themselves, undertook the completion of the translation of the Bible into the Sesotho language. He himself translated Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. In 1863 he started a Sesotho newspaper, "Leselinyana," regarded as the first newspaper to be regularly published in any Bantu language in South Africa. The character, personality, moral and intellectual influence of this man who had devoted all his energy to the upliftment of the Basotho is vividly put before the imagination of the reader in a book written by Dr. Edwin Smith, "The Mabilles of Basutoland." The vanguard of the second generation of missionaries and Coillard, the future pioneer of the Zambezi Mission, arrived in Basutoland immediately after the war (1858), and was initiated into Mission life in a Conference held at Hermon in November 1858. The other three followed in 1860 and 1861. Mabille was appointed at Morija where he proved himself an exceptional man of action. Germond was chosen to take the place vacated by Schrumpf at Bethesda. He later in 1862 founded the mission station of Thabana-Morena, nearly half way between Morija and Bethesda, and Ellenberger replaced him at Bethesda. Coillard had already been placed at Leribe in 1859 when Keck founded a new station at Mabolela.

In 1862 the Roman Catholic Mission started work in Basutoland, when Father Gerard and Bishop Allard settled at Roma, some five or six miles distant from Thaba-Bosiu.

I JOHN, WHO ALSO AM YOUR BROTHER AND COMPANION IN TRIBULATION . . . WAS IN THE ISLE . . . CALLED PATMOS, FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST.

Revelation 1, verse 9

EXILED MISSIONARIES

I

BETWEEN the years 1858 and 1864 the trouble between the Boers and the Basotho had never ceased. The Free Staters were determined to secure the territory as far as the Caledon River (which they eventually succeeded in doing). The Basotho were no less determined to assert their claims as far as the Modder River. Moshoeshoe later declared that the Boers were eager to crush him, because his great sin was that he possessed a good and fertile land.

But the greatest obstacle to peace was a certain unruly Lesaoana, Moshoeshoe's nephew, who declared that he had not been a party to the agreement made by Moshoeshoe in 1858, as to a boundary line between the Boers and the Basotho. His lawless deeds nearly provoked a war with the Natal Government, which would have changed the whole history of Basutoland, had not Coillard intervened as a peacemaker at the critical moment.

Lesaoana was governed by one dominant passion, namely to plunder the Boers. In 1864 he had raided the Free Staters near Bethlehem, and this lawless action led to a declaration of war on Basutoland by President Brand of the Orange Free State. This was done by means of the Proclamation dated "the 9th day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five." The burghers of the Free State are urged to use and take "arms, in the name of God, for the defence" of their "rights" and the "protection of their homesteads and property and for the suppression of the arrogance and violence of the Basotho". On the other hand, the Basotho chief appeals to the British Government "not to assist the Boers openly or secretly to crush him"; and warns the Boers that "they will surely know that they must fear the consequences of war."

The proclamations of the two Governments were ingeniously contrived to appeal to a foreign gallery, each side putting its argument in the best possible light, glossing over misdeeds common to both. The war had begun in its fury.

Three weeks after the declaration of war Lesaoana led an army of about 3,000 strong into Natal and there plundered farms belonging to the Boers some of whom were not under the Free State Government. This angered the Natal Government and it decided to invade Basutoland. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, marched with a large force of Zulus and Europeans to the foot of the Drakensberg, but was met there by Coillard who had been asked by Molapo to explain that the "act was not premeditated by any of the higher chiefs, but the strong-headed act of a turbulent and ignorant under-captain, who shall be duly punished for his evil-doing in whatever way His Excellency may require."

Through Coillard's intercession with the Secretary for Native Affairs, the war which would have crushed for ever the power of the Basotho was averted.

Meanwhile the Boers had resolved upon a supreme effort to subdue the Basotho, and the Volksraad had decreed that all the missionaries were to abandon those stations which were within the territory conquered and annexed to the Free State by one of their greatest commandants, Fick. The expulsion involved the confiscation of their cattle, the ruin of their houses, churches and schools and in so far as it was human, of the work itself. But the work of the Mission is superhuman, and the loss on the part of the missionaries was a blessing for them and their Basotho.

The arbitrary action of the Free State Volksraad was not only dangerous to their cause, but very foolish. Depriving the Basotho of their missionaries meant also depriving them of their one restraining influence. Moreover, public opinion in South Africa began to turn against the Free State, for people realized that the Boers were not the enemy of the Basotho only, but had become that of the christian Mission also.

At the end of March, the missionaries Dyke and Casalis of Hermon, Germond of Thabana-Morena, Cochet of Hebron and others had been escorted to Aliwal North where they were joined later by Mabille who had first desired to follow the Ba-

sotho into the Maluti but whom Letsie did not allow to do so.

Other missionaries endeavoured to find a place of refuge where their scattered flocks might come together. Consequently Ellenberger crossed the Orange River in 1866 and founded Masitise station in the district of Moorosi to whom we have already referred. This station was destined to have a bright future, and the Gospel was preached to a hitherto heathen people. Germond finding the Government of the Free State determined to prohibit the missionaries to return to Basutoland, crossed the Drakensberg to explore "No Man's Land" where some Basotho had just established themselves.

In a letter dated 19th Nov., 1866, written from Aliwal North, he urges the High Commissioner to "encourage a settlement of the Basotho in the vacant country on the eastern side of the Drakensberg . . . which would be an act of mercy towards those unhappy sections of the tribe which are so much ruined by the war."

Although this was not done, his journey had prepared the way for the establishment of mission stations in the district of Matatiele, namely, Paballong and Mafube.

Meanwhile the Committee of the Mission in Paris, the christians of Holland, the Emperor Louis Napoleon III and his Minister of State, Guizot, protested against a decision which forbade the missionaries to re-start their work and return to their mission stations.

The High Commissioner wrote letters to Downing Street, and these arrived at a favourable moment. Casalis, then the Director of the P.E.M.S. and the Emperor's Minister of State had already interviewed some members of the Colonial Office in connection with the question of declaring the country of the Basotho a Protectorate of the British Government. Finally a despatch dated January 13, 1868, reached Moshoeshoe informing him that the Queen had been graciously pleased to grant his request, but that arrangements were being made to decide whether the country would be attached to the Government of Natal or that of the Cape Province.

The Proclamation dated March 12, 1868 reads thus:

"Whereas with a view to the restoration of peace and future maintenance of tranquillity and good government on the north-eastern Border of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Her Majesty, the Queen, has been graciously pleased to comply with the request made by Moshesh, the Paramount Chief, and other headmen of the tribe of the Basutos, that the said tribe may be admitted into the Allegiance of Her Majesty. And whereas Her Majesty has been further pleased to authorise me to take the steps necessary for giving effect to Her pleasure in the matter!

Now, therefore, I do hereby proclaim and declare that from and after the publication hereof, the said tribe of the Basutos shall be, and shall be taken to be, for all intents and purposes, British subjects. And the Territory of the said tribe shall be, and shall be taken to be, British Territory. And I hereby require all Her Majesty's subjects in South Africa to take notice of this my proclamation accordingly.

God save the Queen!

Given under the public seal of the Settlement of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, this 12th March, 1868.

(Signed) P. E. Wodehouse (Governor)."

Immediately after the war, Mabille decided to translate into action the idea of the foundation of the Normal School to which reference has already been made. It was a very bold enterprise. Not knowing whether funds would be available, he gathered together at Morija, a small group of young men and undertook the task of giving lessons himself, while Mrs. Mabille looked after the household management of the pupils. There were no buildings or school furniture and only one teacher. The boys used stones for pillows and the whole scheme appeared to have a very dark future.

Such was the beginning of Morija Training College, one of the most serviceable Institutions not only in Basutoland but also in the whole of South Africa to-day.

I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE: NOBODY COMETH UNTO THE FATHER BUT BY ME. JOHN 14, VERSE 6

CONVERSION OF MOSHOESHOE

ONE day towards the close of the year 1869, the missionary Mabille and Mme. Mabille visited the Chief. Madame Mabille was the daughter of Casalis and had known Moshoeshoe from her childhood, and she was very much attached to him. As they were leaving, they spoke very seriously to him about the Light which he seemed to be rejecting. He begged them to pray for him.

After a few months, the missionary at Thaba-Bosiu came to see him, and he read to him the passage from the 14th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John which had always been a favourite with the old chief. After reading it he said to him: "Son of Mokhachane, a throne is prepared for you in heaven; believe in Jesus, the Saviour of the world, and you will be there."

After the missionary had left, Moshoeshoe had the passage read to him again, and he reproached the christians round him, because they, as he said, had concealed the Way of Salvation from him. In the middle of the night he sent some of them to the missionary to say to him: "Moshoeshoe declares himself a Christian."

The missionary at once came, and the next day he sent for Mabille from Morija, who, when he came, was astounded at the reality of the change he witnessed. The chief begged Mabille to send word of his conversion to the Committee in Paris; and of his own accord he informed the Governor of the Cape and the leading chiefs of Basutoland.

'M'antsopa, the prophetess, who in 1865 had inspired the Basotho warriors to deeds of valour and had declared that the road to heaven was a broad road, and who since then had become a christian, was also sent for. Taking both her hands he said, "My sister . . . now we must both walk in the narrow way."

Mme. Mabille had a baby who was three months old, whom Moshoeshoe declared his contemporary, "because" he said, "three months ago I began to be a man", referring to the time of his conversion.

The date of the baptism of the Chief was fixed for the 12th March, and on the night of the 11th he died.

He was gone who seem'd so great; –
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own.
Being here, and we believe him,
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
God accept him, Christ receive him.

(Lord Tennyson's "Ode on Wellington")

PROGRESS

THE French missionaries had helped the Basotho nation through "the sea of troubles" to a new political regime and complete security when

> "No War, or Battle's sound
> Was heard the World round,"

and "The idle spear and shield were high up hung."

The Basotho were now able to attend in peace to the cultivation of their lands and to tending their cattle.

The church also had made much progress. The number of Christians in 1880 was 5,984 and there were about 71 outstations. The missionaries had also founded a Bible School at Morija where Basotho evangelists are trained, and a Girls' Training School at Thabana-Morena. At the same time a Boy's Technical School was opened at Leloaleng in the District of Quthing, and in later years a Girls' Practical School was opened at Cana, in the north of the territory.

To-day the Mission is gradually giving its place to the Church. There are Church Assemblies, Consistories, Presbyteries, and the mixed Conference called the "Seboka," which are all composed of a great majority of Basotho. Nor are the fruits of their labour now abundant. The Basotho are developing creditable literary qualities of a more or less high standard. Most writers have written books of imagination, novels or tales. Among them we may mention "Moeti oa Bochabela" (The Pilgrim to the East) written by Thomas Mofolo, described as "one of the best books ever written in South Africa." It is a thing of beauty, full of poetry and feeling. There is also "Pitseng", by the same author, which is a novel of modern Basotho life. But Mofolo's most popular book is "Chaka," a historical novel which compares favourably with novels of its type written by such great writers as Walter Scott and others. This has been translated

into English, French and German. It is only in the field of poetry where roughly speaking, not much literary progress has been made. There are a few books on poetry which however, compare very unfavourably with the collection of poems by European writers, but there is hope that some lyrical poets might appear.

EPILOGUE

I

For the last hundred years the Protestant missionaries have identified themselves with the welfare of the Basotho people. They have endeavoured to teach them that man is an immortal soul made in the image of his Creator, that his soujourn in the flesh upon this planet is temporary, existence here being a short rehearsal for real existence hereafter. Nothing, then, that happens to man as a citizen of this world is comparable in importance to what happens to man the son of God, who is an immortal soul.

Inspite of their efforts to impress this vividly upon the people, they still find many of their converts hollow Christians who are very busy pursuing their lusts. The object of the missionary effort in this country to-day is to protect the ordinary Mosotho from the worst results of his own passions.

The real enemy of the Basotho christians is not necessarily poverty and want which are rampant in the territory to-day, but ignorance, combined with the love for the gratification of low appetites, — drunkenness, due to the brewing of strong drink and partly to the smuggling into the territory of intoxicating liquors, and the love for power and influence, more especially on the part of the "sons of Moshoeshoe." These have on many occasions led some of the people to descend to the lowest type of degradation — replenishing with human flesh, horns of medicines, whose efficacy would help them to power, admiration and popularity.

Protestantism in Basutoland is trying, as it has always done, to lead people to the knowledge of truth, real wisdom and happiness, which are different from their shadows and appearances as we see them today. This, the church can do partly by raising the spiritual discipline of their converts, by educating them carefully so that they may be able to differentiate between false and true values. For this end it requires material assistance because the Basotho are not as yet able to support their church fully themselves. At the same time it is necessary for the church to understand that the time has arrived when it must share more fully its responsibility in managing its own affairs.

II

THE minds of the Basotho people are to-day the prey of political, social and economic insecurity. In 1910 when the different Provinces of South Africa decided to form one State, the question arose whether Basutoland should form part of the Union of South Africa. The Government of Great Britain consented in principle to the transfer of the territory. The question which naturally worries the Basotho is whether they would continue to enjoy the same political independence as they enjoy under the regime of the Government of Great Britain.

The missionaries know that the country has already passed through grave crises, in 1852, in 1868 and in 1880, and yet it came out of all this more united and with a clearer vision of their destiny than before. They believe, that the Basotho will continue to live, to develop towards the destiny which God appears to have in store for them provided they seek ends which lie outside the purview of low appetites.

As for the Basotho themselves, they should avoid all forms of hysteria and keep their conscience calm. They should remember that there is a Greater Potentate than all earthly rulers, in whose days "shall the righteous flourish."

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him.

His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." (PSALM 72).

Printed at the Morija Printing Works of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, Basutoland. The type is Monotype Lutetia.

2000 copies of this book have been printed, of which 50 copies are numbered.