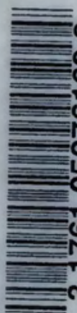

Dawn in Dark Places

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A CAPE BULLOCK WAGGON TREKKING.

DAY-DAWN IN DARK PLACES:

A STORY OF

Wanderings and Work in Bechwanaland.

BY

REV. JOHN MACKENZIE,

Tutor of the Moffat Institution, Kuruman.

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PREFACE

THE life of a missionary in the interior of Southern Africa is usually attended with stirring incident and adventure. Whilst pursuing his great work of evangelist he meets with game and wild beasts in the open country; with wild and degraded men in town and village. He uses waggons, guns, horses, and oxen; he handles trowel, plumb-line, adze, saw, and spirit-level, as well as the usual implements of a minister's study. His highest work is to deliver the message of Heaven's mercy, and to explain the Sacred Book in which it is contained; but he seeks also to teach something of natural science. At times he is a school-master; and again he may be seen with his disciples in the garden or corn-field with spade or plough in his hands.

Readers of "Ten Years North of the Orange River" will feel themselves at home in the pages of "Day-Dawn in Dark Places." In preparing this little book my great object has been to give in brief space a clear and true picture of Mission Life and Work, leaving that to produce its own effect on my readers' mind. I have noticed that books which are much liked by young people are usually favourites with old people also; and I need hardly say that I shall feel quite honoured if this should be the happy fate of the present little volume.

JOHN MACKENZIE.

Portobello, 23rd October, 1883.

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DAY-DAWN IN DARK PLACES.

CHAPTER I.

FROM ENGLAND TO KURUMAN.

A VOYAGE from England to the Cape in a sailing vessel means, for missionary or other voyager, some three months on the sea. Long ago there was no choice, and this long voyage had to be undergone. The first steamships reduced the length of time spent on the voyage by about one-half. In 1858, when our first voyage was performed, it took the mail steamer from England, in which we sailed, thirty-eight days to reach Cape Town. But just as the first steamers improved on the sailing vessels, so have the steamers of the present day improved on those sailing to the Cape some twenty-five years ago. This is seen at once when we say that in 1882, the date of our last voyage, the mails from the Cape were landed from our steamer at Plymouth on the nineteenth day, exactly one-half the time consumed on our first voyage!

Whether the voyage has been long or short, the sight of the land of his destination is welcome to the voyager. Our first pleasure in gazing on Table Mountain, at the foot of which Cape Town is built, was speedily increased by the hearty welcome which we received from friends who were waiting our arrival, among whom were the late

CAPE TOWN.

venerable Dr. Moffat and the Rev. William Thompson, local agent of the Missionary Society. On landing, we soon found ourselves mingling with people of various shades of colour, and heard several (to us) unknown tongues spoken by those whom we passed on our way to the pleasant Mission House in Sir Lowry Street, which was to be our home for the next six weeks. Cape Town is indeed in a wider sense than its first founders could have anticipated "a place of refreshment for passing vessels;" and if modern navigation renders this less necessary than it was two hundred years ago, the wants of modern society at the Cape require the services of many vessels, and from all parts of the world: for the trade is no longer confined to brass wire and beads, in exchange for cattle and sheep, as in the days of Jan van Riebeek, the founder of Cape Town. But as Cape Town was originally a house of call for "refreshment of passing vessels," so was this mission-house a temporary home for missionary voyagers, whether outward or homeward bound. We were a large and very happy family. Indeed, I feel sure that nowhere in all the dwellings of Cape Town or its suburbs were there to be found a more gracious host and hostess, and nowhere more happy and joyous guests, than in the quiet mission-house overlooking Table Bay.

As for ourselves, the life which we had chosen had begun to open up before us. The past with its crowding memories did not on the whole lead us to despond as to the future. The class-room had been now exchanged for the pulpit; drill and review for actual warfare. And if a young man is enthusiastic on the reception of an appointment which in a certain number of years will enable him to enjoy independence, so were we all enthusiastic about our appointment to the work of evangelist. Our office and our work linked us to historical Christianity. In God's providence His Gospel was to be introduced into certain Pagan regions by us. Those who in one age had been martyred, and in another canonised—at first persecuted, and afterwards endowed with lands and with titles, were our historical predecessors in this great work. Above all, in our quiet moments, when our minds were calmed and our souls

hushed, a Presence stole upon us, and a Voice addressed us. They seemed as of One who had appeared in Palestine, and who spoke to us through the long ages of the past; but anon His words thrilled our hearts as fresh and real utterances of the present: "Preach the Gospel to every creature; lo, I am with you alway. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

In making preparations for our journey into the interior, we had frequent occasion to visit various shops and places of business in Cape Town. It was then the custom for the Cape Town storekeepers—at any rate those of the old school—to indulge in a siesta after dinner, which they usually took about noon. I made my appearance one day at a shop at this sacred hour, to complete some purchases, and was astonished to find everything shut, except one-half of the adjoining house-door, at which stood a little black girl. In answer to my demand for the shopkeeper, this sentinel said, in a low tone, "Baas slaap." ("The master is asleep!") I thought what would be the result to this easy-going man of business were he borne by genii, while asleep, and laid gently down and left to awake on London Bridge or Cheapside!

At the invitation of some newly-found friends, we devoted a day to the ascent of Table Mountain. A pleasant party of some twelve or fourteen sat down to "tiffin," or luncheon, on the table-land at the top, and beside a stream of water. It was thought by several of our number that water at such an altitude needed modifying by the application of what is not called "mountain dew" in South Africa, but "Cape smoke." It was here, and from a respected professor's flask, that I drank my first and last "soepje," or dram of Cape brandy. I do not at all recommend it. The view from the top of Table Mountain is one which will abundantly repay the fatigue of the ascent. There was the town itself below us, with its miniature streets and scarcely visible inhabitants. The noble bay, with ships approaching or leaving the harbour, the rugged rock-bound coast on the left, the wide plain on the right, bounded by blue mountains in the distance, gave us our first impressions of African scenery.

We were able also to make acquaintance with the environs of Cape Town, which we found to be very beautiful. At Green Point there are many delightful marine residences, while on the road to Simon's Bay there are villas and villages of surpassing beauty. At the time of our visit, gentlemen in business usually rode or drove into town from these places; but now the railway passes through the

ENTRANCE TO A SOUTH AFRICAN VILLAGE.

villages in question. In his suburban residence, embowered in trees, with its vineyard, its orchard, and its garden, the Cape merchant lives amidst beauty and luxuriance unequalled in England.

Preparations for our journey and excursions into the country were interspersed with exercises of another description. Intending to reside in a country where the man

would be best served who could help himself, we had all more or less given attention to various useful arts in England. Knowing also that our future residence would be surrounded by wild beasts, some of us had given a little attention to the use of fire-arms; but none of our party could boast of much knowledge of such carnal weapons as

OUTSPANNED AT A COLONIAL VILLAGE.

guns and rifles. We were anxious to remove this defect in our training; and when we had an hour to spare in Cape Town resorted to the beach for practice. Now, it is well known to crack-shots, but not much thought of by beginners, that loading well is necessary to shooting well.

"Pray don't put in so much powder at once, Mr. ——," said the son of our host, then a lad of eighteen (now the

respected Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society), to one of our number, who was loading his gun. His only answer was a stern look of superior wisdom, upon which the friendly adviser prudently withdrew to some distance. Hearing a report, he turned round, and beheld Mr. —— standing with nothing in his hand but a bit of the stock of his gun! Happily he escaped unhurt, which fact only added to his bewilderment, as he thought of the rest of the stock, the lock, and the barrel, which had all joined the powder and the shot in their sudden departure! This striking lesson was not in vain. Mr. —— afterwards became a good shot, and in the ordinary course of his work as an itinerant missionary has brought down many an antelope with his rifle.

Our party had the honour of being presented to Sir George Grey, then Governor at the Cape, himself a traveller and explorer. He expressed himself as interested in our undertaking, and cheered us when taking leave by saying that it was not at all impossible, if the country were fully opened up from the east coast by the efforts of Dr. Livingstone and his companions, that he might yet see us at our own stations on the Zambese. His Excellency was kind enough to grant a number of asses, to be used by the missionaries in the transmission of letters, &c., through the habitat of the tsetse-fly. Since 1858 a small sum has also been annually voted by the Cape Parliament for the carriage of letters between the frontier colonial town and Kuruman, which is a great boon, not only to missionaries, but to traders, travellers, and hunters.

Our departure was hastened by the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Helmore by the steamer which had followed us. The oxen having been purchased, servants hired, and waggons made ready, Dr. Moffat and his family left first. About a week after the young missionaries started, under the guidance of Mr. Helmore.

I shall not attempt to describe my first experiences of waggon life. I congratulated myself that, with the assistance of my Hottentot driver Jan Sandveld, and my Kaffir leader William Brown, I had made everything comfortable for my wife's reception, especially as she was then in indif-

ferent health. But a waggon at rest and a waggon in motion are widely different things. This fact was soon deeply impressed on my mind as I beheld a leg of mutton, just provided by our kind hostess, leave the place where I had put it, and with a loaf of bread, some oranges, and sundry other articles, join my astonished wife on the kartel or waggon couch. The whip cracked, driver and leader shouted, and away we went, jolting and shaking, on our way to the Zambeze!

Our encampment was itself a small village. The six waggons, when "outspanned" for the night, were drawn near to each other. The men having finished their day's duties, assembled at one of the fires, when a violin was produced, to the music or at least scraping of which dancing was kept up till past midnight. We sometimes sat outside our waggons enjoying the bright African moonlight, and noticing the uncouth motions of the men, upon whose grotesque forms the large camp-fire cast its light. Or when the night was cold and cheerless, and nothing greeted the ear but the distant barking of the farm-dogs, we fastened down the sails at both ends of our waggon, adjusted our little table, which was suspended from the side of the waggon-tent, and lighting our candle, spent the evening in reading or in conversation.

Our first halting-place after leaving Cape Town was at Stickland, which had been a military post under Sir James Craig, the first English governor of the colony. We then passed through the picturesque town of Paarl, where we formed the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Kolbe, a missionary of our society, and pastor of a large and self-supporting coloured congregation. Some years afterwards, Mr. Kolbe's health having failed, his church called to its pastorate a licentiate of the Dutch Reformed Church, the local Presbytery of which thus received into its hands the material and spiritual results of many years' toil on the part of the London Missionary Society. In acting as they did, the members of the Paarl Church only exercised the right, which the London Missionary Society accords to all the churches which it plants, of choosing for themselves their own form of church government.

At Beaufort West we received a Highland welcome from the Rev. Colin Fraser, the respected minister of the Dutch Church, and a friendly reception from his people. At Victoria West, where we halted for some days to rest our oxen, and at Hope Town, which is on the Orange River, and which we reached in the end of November, we were received with unexpected hospitality by our own countrymen and by others, who bade us also God-speed in the great object of our journey.

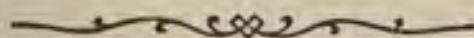
Having crossed the Orange River below its junction with the Vaal, and travelled over a stony and uninteresting tract of country, we came to Griqua Town, a station usually supplied with two missionaries, but then under the care of Mr. Hughes, of the London Missionary Society, an admirable missionary, who after forty-seven years' diligent and uninterrupted service, latterly as the overseer of several native churches, died at his post in 1870.

We had heard in the colony of a war between the Dutch inhabitants of the Transvaal Republic and the Batlaping tribe inhabiting the country in which Kuruman is situated. At Hope Town and Griqua Town we were told that the Dutch were about to follow up the advantage which they had gained, and occupy Kuruman. My fellow-traveller, Mr. Price, and myself, resolved to test the truth of those reports, and accordingly started for Kuruman on horseback, the distance being about 100 miles. We reached Daniel's Kuil the first night, where we were hospitably entertained by the two chief men of the hamlet. The next day being Sunday, we attended the service, which was conducted in Dutch by the deacon, or village schoolmaster, who, by the way, was the son of a former missionary at Griqua Town, who had married a Griqua. It was late on Monday night before we reached Kuruman; but we were delighted with the appearance of the country in the bright moonlight—the thorn-trees on both sides of the road near Kuruman reminding us of the grounds of a country-house in England. On approaching the station we found everything in profoundest stillness; the little village was asleep. Our knocking, however, soon roused Dr. Moffat, who gave his unexpected visitors a joyous welcome to his South African

IN A DIAMOND MINE AT KIMBERLEY.

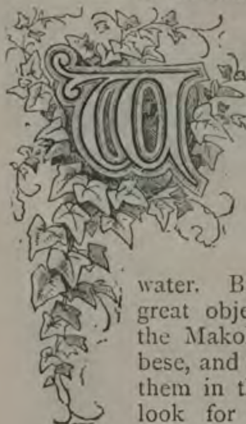
home, which was repeated by his family, and in the morning by Mr. Ashton, his colleague. The latter gentleman had been resident at Kuruman during the disturbance between the Dutchmen and Batlaping, and had visited the scene of the fight after it took place, with a view to mitigate the sufferings of the wounded. Both Dr. Moffat and Mr. Ashton expected that the Dutchmen would renew the attack; and both were quite sure that hostilities would not be resumed before May. This was explained to us to be on account of a deadly disease which extensively prevails in the summer months among the horses, and causes their removal to certain elevated regions, where experience has shown they can live in safety. As a Dutchman never goes to war on foot, it was held certain that no resumption of hostilities would take place until May, when the horses might with safety be brought down into the lowlands. Satisfied with the result of our visit, we returned to Griqua Town for our waggons.

Our weary journey from Cape Town to Kuruman ended only with the year 1858. The same journey can now be performed in a few days—by rail as far as Victoria West; and by coach to Kimberley, where the traveller makes himself acquainted with the marvels of the diamond mines. Employing the ox-waggon at Kimberley, the traveller reaches Barkly, now the head-quarters of Rev. W. Ashton, who has charge of a wide district lying on the Hart and Vaal Rivers, and who sometimes ministers to the European diggers for diamonds on the banks of the Vaal. Since the retirement of Dr. Moffat, Mr. Ashton has been the senior missionary in Bechwanaland, his services having commenced in 1843. For many years he was Dr. Moffat's colleague at Kuruman, sharing in all his labours, and having charge of the mission press.

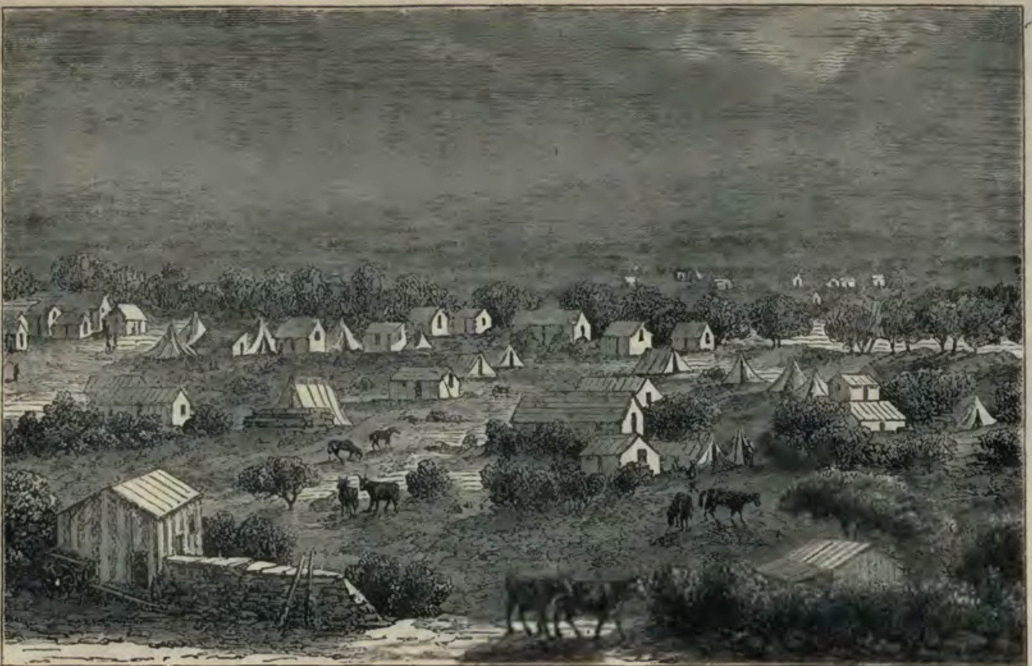


CHAPTER II.

IN CHARGE OF KURUMAN STATION.



WHEN we contemplated the next stage of our journey—from Kuruman to the Zambese—we could not help feeling that it was encompassed with grave and peculiar difficulties. We had made up our minds to the performance of a journey over a country insufficiently supplied with water. But how were we to accomplish the great object of our journey—the removal of the Makololo to the north bank of the Zambese, and the establishment of a mission among them in that healthy region? We could not look for immediate success in this matter except through the intervention of Dr. Livingstone; and it was encouraging to us to learn that Mrs. Livingstone, who had come as far as Kuruman, intended to proceed with the Makololo mission party, with a view of meeting her husband on the Zambese. After giving the whole subject my own most serious thoughts, I communicated to my fellow-missionaries the course ot action which I deemed best under the circumstances. In a letter addressed by



VIEW OF KLIP DRIFT (NOW BARKLY WEST).

me to Dr. Tidman, the Foreign Secretary of the Missionary Society, under date Kuruman, 1st March, 1859, I thus described my proposed "bachelor expedition":—

"Mr. Helmore having lately visited Kuruman, the brethren connected with the new missions met together to consider plans for the future. In the course of the deliberations, I took occasion to propose the following plan in connection with the mission to the Makololo, which commends itself strongly to my judgment as being the best which we could adopt in present circumstances. Instead of committing ourselves entirely to the undertaking at the outset, on the ground of those probabilities of success which are not ascertained, I suggested that the 'Makololo brethren' should, in the first place, make a bachelor-expedition to Linyanti, and negotiate the removal of the tribe to some healthy locality on the north bank of the Zambese. Of course you are aware that it is neither an easy nor a speedy matter to induce a native tribe to 'shift its quarters' without force, even after some of the people have promised to do so. The difficulty is increased if they are asked to return (as will be the case with the Makololo) to a country from which they have been driven by their enemies. . . . Supposing, however, that the difficulties were all removed—that the tribe agreed to receive missionaries and to remove to the north bank of the river—the plan suggested that the three brethren should proceed with them, and open up (if that were possible) a waggon-road to the new station. Arrived at the spot which they and the people agreed in preferring, the missionaries could build temporary huts for themselves and their goods. Their way thus opened up, and a beginning made in the work of instructing the people, Paul, the native teacher, who had agreed to accompany the mission, could be left in charge of the station, while the brethren retraced their steps for their wives and for the remaining portion of their property. The native teacher and our goods left in their midst would in the meantime form a sufficient assurance to the people that we were not deceiving them. When all this should be accomplished, our position in commencing our second

journey for the interior would nearly resemble that of the Matebele mission at present. A great deal of time would, no

DIAMOND DIGGERS ON THE BANKS OF THE VAAL RIVER.

doubt, be spent in accomplishing this plan; but then it has to be proved that the same amount of work could be accomplished in less time by any other; and besides, this

objection must be balanced against others connected with bringing females and children into that country, in the present uncertain state of things."

This proposition was not received with favour by some of those whose age and experience entitled their judgment to great respect. It was of course very unpopular with the ladies. And in point of fact the prospect of being left for more than a year in an unsettled country, and with little protection, was not an inviting one to those who were only newly married, and quite unaccustomed to such a life. However, both Mrs. Mackenzie and Mrs. Price agreed to it, "under protest;" they reluctantly consented to what they believed would be the best. Mr. Price fully approved of the plan. Mr. Helmore, who had been on a visit to Kuruman, promised to inform us of his decision after his return to his family at Likatlong. When his letter came, it announced his intention to take with him at once his wife and four children to the Makololo country; and Mrs. Helmore at the same time wrote in a tone of quiet determination, which showed that she also had carefully considered the matter, and had fully counted the cost. When the news of the disasters at Linyanti reached England, grave charges were brought against the missionaries in the public papers of the day for heedlessly and heartlessly leading women and children into such calamitous circumstances. With the limited information before the writers, it was perhaps inevitable that this complaint should have been made. But I must be excused for expressing the hope that this sketch of the history of the mission will now testify to the anxious deliberation and forethought which were exercised by the gentlemen connected with it, before the last and decisive steps were taken. And although my own ideas were not eventually adopted, I have never ceased to respect the decision, and to admire the heroism which dictated what seemed to me at the time a less advisable course.

Our thoughts and our movements as missionaries to the interior came to be largely affected by other events transpiring at this time. Soon after our arrival at Kuruman, a letter was received by Dr. Moffat, signed by two officers

of the Government of the Transvaal Republic, warning him not to proceed to the establishment of missions in the interior until he had received the sanction of the President of the Republic. As both the Matebele and Makololo countries were far beyond the territories of the Transvaal, and the road thither did not lead through any part of the Republic, Dr. Moffat regarded this as an unreasonable demand, with which he could not comply. Greater uneasiness, however, was produced in the minds of the missionary circle at Kuruman, by the news, which no one doubted, of the intended resumption of hostilities between the Transvaal Republic and the Batlaping tribe, in whose country Kuruman is situated. While no missionary had reason to fear personal violence at the hands of the Dutchmen, the spoliation of Dr. Livingstone's station at Kolobeng taught us all that our equipment for the interior would probably be regarded as a fair prize, and the forcible seizure of it looked upon as no sacrilege by the "Christen menschen" of the Transvaal. It was therefore thought unadvisable to bring in supplies which were lying at Hope Town.

A meeting of the missionaries then residing at Kuruman, or visiting it for a few days, was held there on the 4th of May, for prayer and deliberation regarding the threatening aspect of affairs. Those present, who were seven in number, embodied their views in three resolutions, which were transmitted to the directors of the Society. The following is the second resolution:—"That in consequence of the disturbed state of the country, and the advanced period of the season, it is exceedingly improbable that the Makololo, or even the Matebele mission, will be able to proceed this year."

Soon after this meeting, the large party, which had now spent some months together at Kuruman, was suddenly broken up. Mrs. Livingstone relinquished the idea of meeting her husband by way of the Makololo country, and returned to Cape Town. Death also had its share in this breaking up. Mrs. Ashton, who had for some seventeen years lightened the dwelling and shared the labours and joys and sorrows of her husband, who had been for that period

one of the missionaries at Kuruman, was suddenly called away. After a fortnight's absence at Griqua Town, on missionary business, I found on my return a fresh grave in the quiet Kuruman churchyard, and motherless children still weeping in the first bitterness of their grief. Soon after this, Mrs. Sykes, one of our own companions, received the same summons; only she was called upon to endure severe and protracted suffering before her release. The genuine meekness and resignation which she exhibited were long spoken of by those who witnessed her last days. At the threshold of her life in Africa, she was summoned to receive the reward of the humble and truly devoted Christian. Although far from the English home which she had so recently left, all was done for her that the experience and hospitality and watchful care of Dr. Moffat and his family could accomplish; and although the sufferer's hour had come, the sweet acts which eased the restless pillow, and lighted up the faded features, were not performed in vain. We looked upon both events in the light of family bereavements, for our intercourse had been of that pleasant and unreserved character. It is some satisfaction to be able to record that in neither of these cases was death caused by anything connected with the climate of Africa.

Whilst we were unanimous in passing the resolution already quoted, as well as others which had reference to the imminence of the advance of the Dutchmen, and the advisability of temporarily removing missionary outfit and supplies to places of safety, individual judgment was brought into requisition in carrying out these ideas. Thus articles which were intrinsically valuable to interior missions, or were prized by mission families at Kuruman, were removed to Hope Town, to Griqua Town, or to the Free State, as it seemed best to their owners. Mrs. Mackenzie was not at that time in a state of health in which I could consent to expose her to the uncertainties and disorder of war, so I judged it best to remove to the village nearest to Kuruman, where, with medical attendance, I could obtain a peaceful home for the next few weeks. We left Kuruman in May for Fauresmith, in the Free State, which possessed to us the additional attraction of being the residence of some members

of one of the mission families. Our hurried leave-taking of our friends at Kuruman was in some cases to be a final farewell on earth. We reached Fauresmith on the 7th of June, and met with a warm welcome from the English residents, who had built a little church, but had no minister. I endeavoured to supply this want as long as I was in the

NATIVE POSTMEN.

village. In the house of Mr. Dickson we found a very pleasant home.

Mr. and Mrs. Helmore, whom I had hoped to meet at Likatlong, arrived by another road at Kuruman a few days after my departure. Their hearts were bent on proceeding at once to the Makololo country. Mr. Helmore himself proceeded to Hope Town for the necessary outfit for the journey, which all had hesitated to bring in sooner. His

earnest confidence and unquestioning devotion infected others. What had been hastily removed was now more hastily brought back, and preparations were at once begun for speedy departure into the interior. And then as the season advanced all fear of hostilities on the part of the Transvaal Dutchmen was removed; and the news was heard that the men who had been "commandeered," or called out, had been again disbanded.

This sudden change in the tactics of the Republic was to be ascribed to a timely remonstrance on the subject of the threatened attack on Kuruman, addressed to President Pretorius by Sir George Grey, Her Majesty's representative at the Cape. In his reply the President showed no opposition to the missionaries, and almost re-echoed every sentiment of the Governor's letter—expressing his admiration of the evangelistic labours which had been carried on at Kuruman, &c. Danger from this quarter was thus at an end, at least for a time. I received at Fauresmith the first intimation of the change of plan on the part of the missionaries from some natives who had met Mr. Helmore on his way to Hope Town for supplies. Leaving my wife in charge of her newly-found friends, I proceeded at once to Kuruman in a horse-cart kindly furnished by the Rev. W. B. Philip, then minister to the Griquas at Philippolis, who also accompanied me on the journey. The speed of the horses was an agreeable change from the slow lumbering ox waggon. It is usually reckoned in South Africa that the horse goes exactly twice as fast as the ox. Mr. Philip and I left Fauresmith on the 29th June, and reached Kuruman on the 4th July, having spent the intervening Sunday at the station of Likatlong, which we found in charge of Mr. Ross, as Mr. Helmore's successor.

Arrived at Kuruman, I found that, by dint of great exertion, Messrs. Helmore and Price had nearly completed their preparations, and were soon to commence their long journey. In deliberating upon the future, it was arranged that I should follow my friends early next travelling season, with provisions and other necessaries. Aware that I was disappointed at not being able to accompany the rest of the party, Mr. Helmore very generously remarked that my de

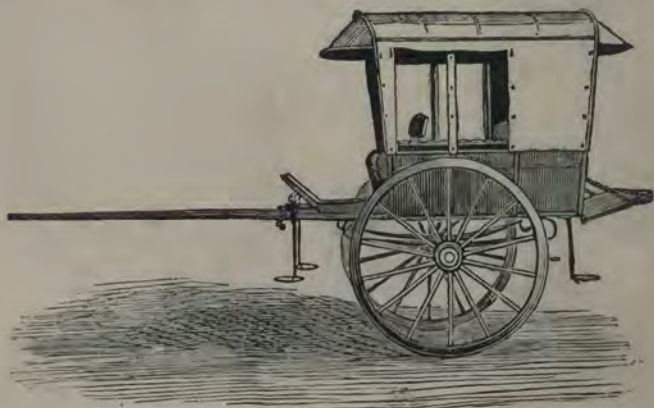
tention for a season would probably be the best disposition of the members of the mission—as it would secure those supplies to the whole party which would certainly be needed after the lapse of twelve months.

On Thursday, the 7th July, I bade my friends God-speed, and returned southward; and on the following day Messrs. Helmore and Price left Kuruman for the country of the Makololo.

During this visit I arranged with Dr. Moffat to return as soon as possible to Kuruman, as that station, owing to Mr. Ashton's absence, would be without a missionary whenever Dr. Moffat left with his party for the Matebele. As a novice in the work, I looked forward with eager pleasure to the quiet months at Kuruman, and was glad to learn that Paul, the native teacher, had been engaged to assist in the public services. Having before this time acquired some knowledge of Dutch, I felt that Paul's acquaintance with that language especially fitted him to assist me in my study of Sechwana. If this hurried visit to Kuruman was opportune, just enabling me to consult with my friends before their departure for the interior, my return to Fauresmith was equally so; for not two days after, domestic anxieties and fears gave place to grateful joy in the birth of our first child. I take the liberty to mention this event, because it led us away from the rest of the mission party at a crisis in its history. Our son, however, was only a fictitious addition to the population of the Free State; for as soon as possible after his advent we left the little congregation at Fauresmith, and our kind and hospitable friends, amid many expressions of goodwill, and returned to mission work at Kuruman.

As a dialect of Sechwana was spoken by the Makololo, I had a twofold inducement to its study: the discharge of duties now devolving on me, and the qualifying of myself to speak to the more ignorant people on the Zambese. Before our departure from Kuruman, most of the young missionaries had preached short sermons in Sechwana. We had been assisted in our study of the language by Mr. Ashton. At that time there was no printed vocabulary, and practically no grammar of the language. We had

copied part of one grammar which was exhibited in a public museum or library in Cape Town, and I managed, as a favour, to procure, for the purpose of copying, another grammar which had been printed for private circulation. For a dictionary we had the Sechwana Bible and Cruden's Concordance. So we were compelled to stick to language employed in Scripture at the outset, and it was seldom we were at a loss for the word we wanted. Mingling with the people, and picking up words and phrases as uttered by them, I believe none of us had found the acquisition of a



A CAPE CART.

smattering of the language to be difficult. On my sitting down to the composition of a sermon every week, I found gradually my store of words increasing, and some of the idioms and finer shades of meaning become plain. It was my custom to read over what I had written in the hearing of Paul, the native teacher, who stopped me when I used a wrong word or expression. At first I troubled the good man sadly by asking him in my ignorance why it was as he said, and not as I had rendered it. This seemed to him an unnecessary question. It simply was so—that was all he

knew. After a little time and care I came to see for myself the rules or laws of the language, concerning which my instructor knew nothing whatever, although daily observing them in practice. For a long time every word which I spoke in the pulpit in Sechwana was scrupulously written down.

A facility for acquiring languages is a great recommendation to a person intending to be a missionary; but I am persuaded that it is a great mistake to discourage young men of average ability from devoting themselves to this work, because they have not particularly distinguished themselves in classical studies. Such a person, if thrown amongst the people whose language he is to speak, will infallibly acquire it. He may take longer time to do so than another man; but slowness and sureness often go together. In order, however, to speak a foreign language correctly, giving every consonant and vowel its sound and its quantity, it is necessary that one should have what is called a good musical ear. Without this no one will speak "like a native;" but at the same time it ought to be understood that without this a man can fully master the language, in everything except this delicacy of pronunciation, and may prove himself a useful and successful missionary.

The time which was not required for the study of the language I gave to works on medical subjects. This period of reading at Kuruman, with what attention I had snatched from other studies and given to medicine in England, helped me afterwards to alleviate much pain, and, with God's blessing, to effect many cures after native doctors had deserted the cases as hopeless. I believe a young practitioner in this country is much the better for a strikingly successful case upon his first settlement in a district. One of my first cases at Kuruman was sufficiently striking, and very successful. In consequence of it I found, on the following travelling season, that my fame had preceded me into the interior, and all sorts of cases were brought, some for delicate surgical operations—all of which I declined, telling the people that I was a teacher and not a doctor, but that I was willing to help them as far as I could. But

now for the case itself, which was the bite of the South African tiger or tiger-cat.

Two men belonging to the Batlaro Town, which is some twelve miles from Kuruman, were returning home after a day's hunt. They had been unsuccessful, having expended all their ammunition without killing anything. The hunters were passing through some dense bush when a tiger sprang on one of them, seizing him by the cheek with his teeth, and scratching his body with his claws. Having inflicted what it considered a deadly wound, the tiger let the man go and retreated into the bush—for this animal does not immediately devour its prey, although it is said often at once to suck the blood. The wounded man's friend now returned, and carried him home. His face was in a dreadful state, the jaw being damaged, the cheek torn and perforated, and even the poor fellow's tongue injured. The man who had carried him home now walked to Kuruman to ask help; confessing to me, however, that he did not think his friend could survive. I gave him the wherewithal to make a poultice for the whole side of the face, and sent also some medicine to strengthen and support the man. Many a time that faithful friend walked the twelve miles to report the progress of the cure. At length his visits became less frequent; and I was wondering what had become of him, when one day a stranger walked into the mission-house where I was living. It was my patient, come to exhibit the cure, and, I thought, to make at least a touching speech expressing his indebtedness to me. He sat down, and narrated the whole thing over again, mentioning the various medicines which had been given, &c. He then said—"My mouth is not exactly where it used to be" (which was quite true, the damaged cheek having shrunk), "but the wound is quite whole. Everybody said I should die, but your herbs cured me. You are now my white man. 'Naea thipa tle, Ra' (Please to give me a knife)."

I could not believe my own ears, and asked, "What do you say?"

"I haven't got a knife; please to give me a knife. You see," he added, as I wondered what reply I should

make, "you are now my own white man, and I shall always come and beg of you!" This seemed to me a most wonderful transposition of relationship; and I began to think the man's mouth was not the only oblique thing about him.

A NATIVE DOCTOR.

I mildly suggested that he might at least thank me for my medicines.

He interrupted me, "Why, am I not doing so? Have I not said that you are now my white man? and do I not now beg a knife from you?"

I gave the man up as a very wonderful specimen of jumbled ideas; but after all there was an explanation to

his conduct which subsequent intercourse with heathen people enabled me to discover. The man's position, which was so mysterious to me at the time, was this. Here is a person who has cured me. I am come to do him honour. How shall I do so? By begging from him! To be begged from is one of the marks of chieftainship among Bechwanas. A stranger will say that his chief is a great man; people come from all quarters to beg from him!

CHAPTER III.

JOURNEY NORTHWARD TO SECHELE'S TOWN.

WE left Kuruman on our way to the Makololo country on the 25th May, 1860. Some of the men who had accompanied Dr. Livingstone in his journeys to the distant interior were natives of Kuruman and its neighbourhood; and as they took care not to understate the privations which they had endured on the road we were about to take, I had at first some difficulty in hiring suitable men. Those also who had good waggons were reluctant to part with them for such a length of time. Mr. Helmore had engaged a native to follow him with a load of necessaries for the new mission; but this person had not fulfilled his engagement, and the goods were still at Kuruman. It being thus absolutely necessary that I should convey supplies to Messrs. Helmore and Price, I was compelled to avail myself of such waggons as were procurable. These were old and very rickety, and were a source of annoyance to me during the whole journey. Then in my inexperience of such wretched vehicles, and with the desire to carry in as much as I could for my friends, I so overloaded them that one actually broke down altogether, and had to be left behind.

Taking warning, I lightened the others while still in the neighbourhood of Kuruman.

I had got thoroughly interested in the work of the Kuruman station, and was gratified by the good wishes which were expressed on all hands when we left. Two promising boys, then at school, put into my hand each a little note full of affection and earnestly-expressed prayers. Mrs. Moffat and her daughters kindly accompanied us as far as Klein Chwai, where we spent a peaceful and very happy Sunday together, before taking what we then thought might be a last farewell. At that time we cherished the hope that should an available port for commerce be found by Dr. Livingstone on the east coast, it might be possible for us, in the course of time, to communicate with England by that route, which would be much nearer than by way of the Cape Colony.

Among the dozen men composing my party there were representatives of several races. I had Mebalwe, who was for some time Livingstone's assistant, and who shared with the Doctor the wounds and the danger in the encounter with the lion at Mabotsa, and who, after a long and consistent life, died last year at Kuruman. I found him a most valuable and trustworthy man, whose years and experience commanded respect from the rest of the party. Then there were several Bechwanas, one Hottentot from the Colony, one Griqua, a Kaffir woman, who was the wife of one of the men and Mrs. Mackenzie's servant. The spare oxen were driven by Furu, a Bushman, whose master or owner was the driver of my own waggon. I agreed with his master about Furu's wages, which I made higher than usual, upon condition that he should not only drive on the loose cattle, but as soon as the waggons were unyoked, collect and herd the whole troop together. By this arrangement I was saved a great deal of trouble on my northward journey; and my cattle did not stray once between Kuruman and the Botletle river. No matter at what hour the night's journey was finished, or how dense the jungle round our encampment, Furu was always at his post, collected the wearied and hungry oxen, and whistling cheerfully to them drove them in a body for an hour's

WAGGON TRAVELLING; FORDING A RIVER.

grazing, after which he brought them close up to the waggons, and then himself had the luxury of joining the circle round the fire. Accustomed to this every night, the cattle became very tame, so that often when I went to have evening prayers at the fire, I could with difficulty find an open path on account of the denseness of the cattle lying close round the waggons and chewing the cud, or sleeping off the fatigues of the day. I must not omit Fama, the only child of our nurse, a bright Kaffir boy of seven or eight years of age, who accompanied his parents. Resting all the time the waggons were travelling, this sprite used to jump out when we unyoked—ready for any amount of mischief, and taking special pleasure in teasing one after another of the wearied men, as they lay under the shade of the tree. His father had a twofold office. He was engaged as cook; but having announced that he was a good shot, and fond of hunting, his office came to include providing the meat as well as cooking it. In order still further to lighten my insufficient waggons, I hired another, with two Bakwena men, and a team of oxen from the chief Sechele. I had thus with me some thirteen people, and had in charge about seventy oxen, three horses, and four waggons. At the head of this party I was to spend the next nine months.

Before we left Klein Chwai we were joined by Messrs. Reader, Lamont, and Burgess, who were also on their way to the Zambese country. Without forming one party, we were for some time close to one another on the road; and at Maritsane river we spent Sunday together. Strange to say, on comparing notes I found that one of these hunters, when a boy, had gazed upon the same mountain whose scaurs and crags were familiar to myself in youth. Although we met in Africa as perfect strangers, the same strath had given us birth, and the hoarse music of the same rapid-flowing river had been familiar to us both. Like the world itself, the Scotch may be said to exist between a centrifugal and a centripetal force. They are never pleased till they go abroad, and when abroad are never tired of thinking and speaking of "auld lang syne;" and many are never satisfied till they find themselves back in their "ain

countrie" again. That short English service was the last which my fellow-countryman was destined to attend. But little did we think so as we worshipped together at Maritsane river. Mr. Burgess was killed in the hunting-field a short time after this by the explosion of gunpowder in his waggon, caused by fire dropping from a lighted tobacco-pipe.

Before reaching the town of the Bangwaketse, one of the hired waggons broke down, and we were detained at Kanye while it was repaired. Our detention, however, was enlivened by the appearance of Mr. Sykes, from the Matebele country, who told us of the welfare and success of the party of the preceding year, under Dr. Moffat. With the large town of Kanye close to us, to whose inhabitants we could now deliver the gospel message in their own language, we found ourselves sufficient employment. Through the teaching of one of the Kuruman native schoolmasters, we found that Hasiitsiwe, the chief, and one of his wives, had made some progress in learning to read. But the body of the people were wedded to their customs, although constantly exhorted and instructed by Sebube, whose zealous efforts were, however, somewhat interfered with by the fact that, not having a sufficient salary, he lived at a considerable distance from the town, at a fountain where he could irrigate and raise food for himself and family. The Bangwaketse were once a large and powerful tribe, and they still number perhaps six or seven thousand people. It was very difficult for me to answer their chief's question, "Why do you pass us by, and go to the distant Makololo and Matebele? Why not teach us also?" It was matter of surprise to me why certain Bechwana towns had no missionary, although willing to receive one. But this grave error has since been remedied, and there is now a chain of stations extending from Kuruman to Shoshong, and from Shoshong to Lake Nghabe on the north-west and to Inyate on the north-east. Under the care of the Rev. James Good, a Christian church has been collected from among the Bangwaketse, and educational and evangelistic work is pursued with vigour and success by the missionary and his assistants.

While detained at Kanye, Moleme, the native teacher at the neighbouring Barolong town under the chief Montsiwe, came to the waggons with the request that we should visit his congregation and administer the ordinance of baptism. Mr. Sykes and I had much pleasure in doing so. We found that the power of Christianity was evidently felt in the village. In Montsiwe and Moleme, who are brothers, we had an instance of the separations which the Gospel makes in heathen lands: the one believing in Christ, the other cleaving to Paganism. The Barolong were formerly under the care of the Wesleyan Society, and their last missionary, the Rev. Mr. Ludorf, gave up his charge at Lotlakane on the dispersion of the tribe by the Transvaal Republic.

Some of this people lived in the neighbourhood of Tuang, and joined with the people of that station as members of the church. But at this town, except for the occasional visit of a missionary, Moleme has the entire charge of the infant church, and he seemed to be a careful as well as zealous man. The spirit of the people was earnest and enthusiastic; and thus furnished another example of the strength and power of that Christianity which is fostered at once by independent thought and humble prayer, and not enervated by over-dependence upon the help of the European missionary.

On approaching Kanye, the large aloe-trees attract the attention of the traveller; and again on leaving the town and descending the steep mountain on the way to the Bakwena, there are other indications that he is now entering a more genial and better-watered region. The little bushes of the Karroo had given place, after we crossed the Orange River, to an extensive belt of country covered with the larger moretlwa and mohatla bushes, with here and there, at the foot of mountains and along their gorges, small forests of acacias. Now, however, the timber increases in size and variety; the mountains are wooded on their sloping sides and table-shaped summits; while even in the case of the more rugged and abrupt hills and peaks, a generous vegetation seeks to cover their yawning fissures and unshapely rocks.

We passed at some distance on our right the site of Kolobeng, where Dr. Livingstone spent many years as a missionary. I afterwards visited the ruins of a mission station now entirely uninhabited. I stood in the roofless house, every brick of which the Doctor had laid with his own hand. I went to what had been his garden, and returning to the entrance of the house, gazed upon the scenery which must have been familiar to the eyes of its former occupants. Yonder was the site of the town which the evangelist had so often visited. There the grassy plot where strangers from a distance would "outspan" when they came for medical advice, which they always received gratis. There at my feet were the rocks upon which the bottles of medicines were dashed to pieces by the men who had been cured of diseases on that very spot. Missionaries lay no claim to infallibility, and they are free to admit that their position in times of turmoil and strife is a difficult one, and if they remain at their post at all their conduct is very apt to be misconceived and misunderstood. Instances have occurred on the frontiers of the Cape Colony in which charges as heavy as any ever brought against Livingstone by the Dutchmen were preferred against missionaries by colonists, and upon equally insufficient grounds. But then there was this important difference: where British law existed, these charges, not being supported by evidence, passed away with the excitement of which they were the product. But the Transvaal Republic, within a few years after it secured its "independence," broke up no less than five mission stations, established by disinterested men, and supported by the Christian benevolence of a distant country.

More recently, and during the time when Mr. Burgers was President of the Republic, a mission of the French Protestant Church to the Banyai, a tribe living to the north of the Transvaal, was turned back by the Transvaal Government; and permission asked by a French Protestant missionary to pass through the country for missionary purposes was refused—so little have the French Protestants of to-day in common with the Transvaal descendants of the French Protestants of some two hundred years ago. Want

of education, and the debasing influence of frontier life, have made the difference. The present spoliation of Bechwanaland and the wresting of part of the country from its owners, by irresponsible men of European descent, chiefly Transvaal Boers, show that the old race-enmity has not died out from among ignorant frontier men, who count it no wrong to trample on the rights of coloured people.

Two days after our departure from Kanye, we reached Liteyana, which was then the residence of the Bakwena tribe under the chief Sechele. Our reception here was gratifying; the chief himself made his appearance at the waggon, and politely greeting us in English fashion, offered us also the African welcome of an ox for slaughter, which was accordingly shot on the spot. Sechele was the finest specimen of the Bechwanas whom I had yet seen, being tall and well made, with a good head, an open countenance, and unusually large eyes. His dress was somewhat singular. At one time he appeared in a suit of tiger-skin clothes made in European fashion. On another broiling day he was dressed in an immense mackintosh overcoat with huge water-boots. After a youth of romantic adventure and great hardship, Sechele found himself at the head of the Bakwena, then considerably reduced owing to recent wars and dissensions. In 1842 he was visited by Dr. Livingstone, who was to exercise so much influence over his mind. The Doctor afterwards resided with the Bakwena, and Sechele gave himself to instruction, and proved himself an apt scholar. After some three years' probation, Dr. Livingstone admitted Sechele into the church by baptism. So long as the encouraging and stimulating influence of his teacher was near to him, the chief's conduct would seem to have been all that could be desired. But this consistency was not kept up after the Dutchmen had attacked his town, and he was left alone to pursue his course amid the querulous taunts of his own people. He was well-nigh alone in his tribe in his profession of Christianity; and many of the people refused to see more in it than a vain desire to "make himself a white man." Then the rain-making and other customs were still carried on in the town, and at the

expense of a younger brother of the chief, called Khosilintsi. But if this person paid for the rain, and otherwise performed the "orthodox" customs every year, he would, in point of fact, be the preserver of the town, and its virtual head in the public estimation.

I believe Sechele's first compromise of principle was an interference to arrest what he supposed would lead to the total subversion of his power. He resolved himself to send for rain-makers and to pay them out of his own cattle. At first this compromise was secret and unacknowledged. But it became gradually known in the country that "Sechele was now making rain." By-and-by the secrecy was thrown aside, and he openly assisted in the performance of heathen ceremonies. But it must be borne in mind that all this time this singular man was most exact in the observance of private and family prayers, and stood up regularly every Sunday to preach to the Bakwena. His position seemed to be one which he has not been by any means the first to occupy—that Christianity might be engrafted upon heathen customs, and that the two could go together. For instance, he himself would go with the people in their rain-making ceremonies, but he would not neglect at the same time to pray to God. He would use charms and incantations, washings and purifyings, according to the old rule, and yet profess faith in Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin. The Bible, in short, did not require him to give up the customs of his ancestors, although it required him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He could be an orthodox Mochwana and a good Christian at the same time. This was the position which he took up, and the tenor of many of his discourses. I have spent many of the hours of night with this clever chief in the earnest discussion of these points. When one after another his arguments failed him, he has said to me, "You have conquered: your idea of the Christian life is the right one; but was I not alone? What is one man against all the Bakwena?"

"How hard it is for us all, Sechele, for me as well as for you, to believe that God with us is greater than all who can be against us!"

"Monare" (Sir), he replied with feeling, "not hard for

you; you are a missionary; your faith is great. But hard for me, who am chief of a heathen town."

It would have given me pleasure to chronicle greater steadfastness and spirituality of mind as characteristics of a man who occupies so prominent a position in Bechwana-

A RAIN-MAKER.

land as the chief of the Bakwena. But it is no part of my duty to manufacture or distort facts. However heroically Sechele set out as a Christian, separating himself from all that was connected with heathenism, instead of carrying numbers with him by the power and depth of his convictions, in the course of time his people dragged him back

to them. "Was he ever a Christian at all?" says one critic. "Is he not one still?" says another. Regarded with great suspicion by men of the old school, as insincere in his return to the observance of their ceremonies, Sechele is looked upon with even greater mistrust by native Christians, as one still in the thrall and bondage of this world, and a stumbling-block to all converts. The Europeans in the country, whose standard (for black men) of morals and consistency is decidedly high, put this chief down as a clever humbug. The most charitable interpreters of a life of temptation and struggle are the missionaries, who hope that to this chequered career a brighter chapter may yet be added, and who feel that even now it does not befit them to "cast a stone" at such a life as that of Sechele.

For a few years, missionaries belonging to Hermannsburg, in Hanover, resided with Sechele, and under their care he occupied the position of a member of the church. The circumstances under which he procured these missionaries further exemplify the character of the man. After the departure of Dr. Livingstone, one and sometimes two native teachers resided with Sechele. Dr. Moffat gave him to understand, however, that as much valuable property had been destroyed at the stations which had been broken up by the frontier farmers, it was not probable that he could soon receive another missionary from England. But Sechele was determined, as he explained to me, to show that he had power to get a missionary at once from some quarter. So, without consulting his people, and to the surprise of all the country, he actually made application to the Transvaal Government for a missionary!

President Pretorius gave prompt attention to his request, and hearing that German missionaries had landed in Natal, and understanding that they were Moravians, for whom Dutchmen profess great respect, he forwarded the Bechwana chief's petition to the Hanoverian missionaries, who had been driven back from their original destination in the Galla country, and were somewhat uncertain as to a suitable locality for their labours. The

arrival of Sechele's letter in such circumstances was regarded by these devout men as an indication of the will of Providence that they should proceed into Bechwanaland. What was their surprise, on arriving at the station, to find all the detail of missionary work in full operation, under Paul, the native teacher! They had not known the previous history of this Bechwana chief; and they were for a time afraid lest the London Missionary Society should regard them as intruders in a district so long occupied by its agents.

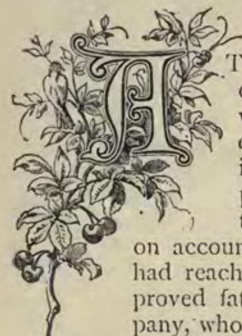
But the arrival of Dr. Moffat on his way to the Matebele put an end to all their fears on this score. He explained to them the hesitation of the London Society at once to send a successor to Dr. Livingstone at the Bakwena; and assured them that, now they were in the country, he could only bid them God-speed as fellow-labourers. The missionaries once obtained, by the exercise of his own power and influence, Sechele seems gradually to have repented of the step he had taken; or, as in other things, to have bent to the will of the people, who had always a prejudice against "the missionaries who," they said, "came from the Boers." After the lapse of some years Sechele sent a formal declaration to Natal and to England, that "he did not wish the teaching of the Germans, but one who would instruct him as Dr. Livingstone had done." It was in the end amicably arranged between the two Societies that the Hanoverian mission should direct attention more particularly to tribes residing within or near to the Transvaal, while the London Society should reoccupy the station at Sechele's. The two Societies might thus work their way northward, the one on a route slightly to the east of the other.

We were very kindly and hospitably received by Mr. Schroeder, of the Hanoverian Society, who afterwards died of fever at this station. The German missionaries had not been idle since their arrival. Besides attending to the acquisition of the language, they had built a dwelling-house for themselves and another for the chief. The latter was neatly finished, and Sechele, who had been to Cape Town, and had seen the interior of many English homes, was very careful in keeping everything in order. Mase-

bele, his wife, was well dressed, and, if not quite abreast of her husband as to politeness, was very kind, and interested herself much in making inquiries about our relatives in England. We were introduced to Sechele's family, some of whom had been to Kuruman, and had resided for a time in Dr. Moffat's house. Like the chief himself, these young people were kind, intelligent, and pleasant, but entirely lacking in decided views or strong preference as to religion. Compromise seemed the motto of all. In after-years, however, more than one of Sechele's family have entered upon a decided Christian career.

CHAPTER IV.

JOURNEY NORTHWARD: A THIRSTY DESERT.



AT Kopong, two days beyond the town of Sechele, we met a party of Transvaal Dutchmen coming out from an elephant hunt in the interior. They inquired anxiously concerning native politics; and gave us to understand that they had protracted their hunt on account of certain warlike rumours which had reached them. This delay had well-nigh proved fatal to an Englishman in their company, who was then slowly recovering from fever. As this was my first contact with a disease so prevalent in the district to which I was journeying, I got the man to describe his symptoms and the remedies which he had used. With reference to the Dutch mode of treatment in his and in other cases, all that can be said is, that the poor people do their best in the circumstances in which they are placed. Before leaving home, and when they are buying supplies of groceries, &c., for their hunt, they purchase from the store-keeper a small tin box, gaudily painted, and labelled "huis-apotheek," being an assortment of medicines for domestic use. Some have more skill than others in the use of these medicines; but I have heard the remark made, as a matter of course, concerning a protracted illness, "We tried the whole medicine-box, bottle after bottle, but with-

out result." Like their tea and sugar, the "huis-apotheek" is usually exhausted before they have finished their hunt. It had been so in the present case; and when the unfortunate Englishman became ill the stock of medicines had become entirely exhausted. So the Dutchmen gave him what they had: pure tar, a spoonful now and then, with water; and the fat of game, applied externally and internally. Failing to produce perspiration, they actually rolled the miserable man in the burning sand as a sudorific! Their patient, however, did not die, as might have been expected; and change of air had made him convalescent when we met him, although his weakness and haggard looks still excited our compassion. Some years afterwards I met this person, who walked up to me as to an old friend. Failing at once to recognise him, he said almost upbraidingly, "Don't you remember the wretch for whom Mrs. Mackenzie made such delicious beef-tea at Kopong?"

Between Boatlanama and Lopepe, Khosimore, who rode one of my horses, was fortunate enough to shoot an eland. It is considered a masterly thing if you can drive the eland or the giraffe to the waggon road, or to the encampment, as the case may be, and there shoot it. So Khosimore was not a little proud that he had succeeded in bringing it close to the waggon road, where, as he said, Ma-Willie (Mrs. Mackenzie) could see it. The eland is a beautiful creature, combining great elegance with considerable size and weight of body. The meat of a fat eland is richer than the best beef. All hands were speedily at work skinning and cutting up our prize. Having secured it in the waggons, we again proceeded towards water at Lopepe.

We arrived at Shoshong, the town of the Bamangwato, under the chief Sekhome, on the 20th July. This is, perhaps, the largest of all the Bechwana towns, and, indeed, one of the largest in Southern Africa. Shoshong was afterwards to be my own station and place of residence for years, but at present it was of importance to us as the last place where supplies of native corn could be purchased, and additions made to the number of the draught oxen. There had arrived here, a short time before, a Hanoverian

IN A NATIVE COURTYARD.

missionary, who very kindly received us. Here also I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Moffat, who was then on his way to Kuruman from Moselekatse's country. He brought the good news that the mission to the Matebele had been established at a place called Inyate, and that the missionaries were already preaching to the Matebele through interpreters. This news rendered us all the more desirous to ascertain the success of the Makololo branch of the new mission. But no news had reached the Matebele country from them. Nor had the Bamangwato more recent intelligence than we ourselves had received at Kuruman before starting. I found, however, that the Bamangwato had not forgotten Mr. Helmore. My future friends and coadjutors, Khame and Khamane, the sons of the chief Sekhome, who were now attending school, and who had been already baptised by Mr. Schulenborg, spoke very gratefully of a service which Mr. Helmore had held in the large "kotla," or courtyard of Sekhome, when passing northward the previous year. I have often since heard the common people among the Bamangwato refer to this service, and mention some of the preacher's remarks. It would seem that Mr. Helmore found special favour in the eyes of Sekhome, who assembled all his people on the Sunday morning as if to a native "pitsho," or assembly. When Mr. Helmore rose to conduct worship, the large courtyard was crowded with men. The remark which the Bamangwato make concerning the preacher of that day is, "O la a itse go bua" ("He knew how to speak"), *i.e.*, he preached so as to impress and interest his audience.

The following extract from a letter written by Mrs. Helmore, at Shoshong, to a daughter, then at school in England, gives a vivid picture of their circumstances and feelings when at this place the previous year:—

"I intended to write to you a long letter from this place, but am afraid I shall not be able. The people crowd about our waggons and tents all day long, making the most deafening noise, so I have been obliged to leave letter-writing till candle-light. . . .

"There must now be a post for us at Kuruman, but when we shall get it I do not know. Do not be discouraged at

not hearing from us regularly; trust that we are well and safe. We will commend each other to the Lord, the parents the children, and the children the parents, and then there will be no fear or anxiety. I want to know how you spent your midsummer holidays. By the time you get this it will be Christmas again. In about three weeks we hope to reach the Zouga or Botletle, stay there a little, and then go on to Linyanti. It will be the beginning of November before we get there. When we have seen Dr. Livingstone, we shall arrange about your coming home."

So planned this Christian mother for the establishment of a "home" on the north bank of the Zambese, such as they had possessed for years on the north bank of the Vaal.

Dr. Moffat was the bearer of a message from Moselekatse to Sekhome, which he now delivered. It was to the effect that he might "sleep," as he (Moselekatse) had now no intention of going to war with any one. He had promised to Dr. Moffat, in 1854, that he would avoid everything like aggressive war, and now announced his intention to adhere to that promise. In a future chapter we shall see how much truth and sincerity were in this message from the Zulu despot. A Sunday intervening whilst we were still at Shoshong, Mr. Schulenborg requested Dr. Moffat to share with him the labours of the day. The Bamangwato assembled in considerable numbers, and Dr. Moffat discoursed to them with great solemnity on themes seldom present to the heathen mind—death, judgment, and the world to come.

After parting with our venerable father in mission work at Shoshong, we commenced the most difficult part of our journey. But we trusted we were not unprepared to enter it. Not having many large water-vessels, I had purchased a calabash for each man, with the understanding that no one should visit the "public" water-vessels except the cook, who would give out the necessary water for cooking. I found this plan answer very well. I was never without water, and never required to interfere and give it out myself. Khosimore jealously guarded his "vatjes," or

water-vessels; and when the men were thirsty they had recourse to their own calabashes. A spirit of emulation also entered among them, and it came to be matter of inquiry at the evening fire who had most frequently visited

CALABASHES.

their supply of water during the day. It was held that such had declared themselves to be the babies of the party. The leader of my own waggon had been provided by his father at Kuruman with a stone jar to hold water for the

young man's own use. "At the jar again!" was frequently heard announced from waggon to waggon, as this young traveller washed away the sand of the desert from his throat. As for Furu, the Bushman, when the waters were far apart he was accustomed to carry his calabash on his shoulder, but rarely had recourse to it. He obtained refreshment from the roots and tubers which he was continually digging up; and in the evening his wallet contained others which needed roasting.

Entering the pass of Monakalongwe, we watered our cattle at the beautiful fountain of Lotlotshe, which rises on the north side of the Bamangwato range of mountains. Reaching Kanne, where there is a considerable town of Bakalahari, we sent our cattle to drink water at Loale, a place lying to the north-east.

We left Kanne after sunset on Thursday evening, and entered the long and dreary desert stretching northwards. After two days' and two nights' hard work for all concerned, we reached Nkowane on Saturday evening a little before sunset. The country through which we were now travelling was exceedingly monotonous and uninteresting. The hollows which contain pools of water in summer were now dried up, and along the "mokoko," or ancient river-bed, to our left, we were told there was not a drop of water. Without a single hill in sight, we found ourselves traversing an undulating prairie, whose gently sloping ridges of sand followed one after another like the waves of the sea. The long ripe grass, of a lightish yellow colour, gave to the landscape something of the appearance of one immense harvest-field. A solitary camel-thorn, with fantastically turned branches, was here and there seen in the distance; while a variety of small shrubs and bushes was distinguishable only in our neighbourhood from the tall white grass, gently bending to the afternoon breeze, or standing droopingly in the breathless stillness and dazzling glare of noonday.

"A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
With the twilight bat from the yawning stone.

. . . . .

A region of drought, where no river glides,
No rippling brook with osier'd sides—
Where sedgy pool, nor bubbling fount,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mount,
Appears to refresh the aching eye;
But the barren earth and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon round and round
Spread—void of living sight or sound." *

Not a living creature was to be seen for miles; but, once outspanned, we found that even here life was not entirely extinct. More frequently than snake or lizard we found near to our waggon a little cricket, industriously making what noise it could; and in the dreariest places we observed a little bird about the size of a lark, which, like that bird, rose from the earth to give forth its song. But its soaring and its song were of short duration. It rose only some fifteen or twenty feet from the ground, uttering meanwhile its one plaintive note, which again subsided as it descended to the ground. After a brief interval this lonesome bird would repeat its desert dirge. In the distance we sometimes descried the shy khama (hartebeest), or the kukama (gemsbuck or oryx), fleetest of the antelopes; an occasional herd of springbucks cropping the short thick grass of the hard river-bed; and once or twice we saw in the distance troops of elands and giraffes, roaming at will and without thought of water. After leaving a fountain our cattle when unyoked usually grazed well for the first twenty-four hours; but thirst afterwards took away inclination to eat, so that, although surrounded by the rich sweet grass of the prairie, as soon as they were out of the yoke they sought the shade of a neighbouring tree, and there remained till brought again to their place before the waggon.

I was told by the Bakalahari at Nkowane that they kept one of the wells shut because it was easy of access, and if it had water the lions would come and drink there, and infest their dwellings and their sheep and goat pens, at night. The second well was in the hollow of the limestone rock—its sides abrupt, and the water accessible only by means of a sort of ladder. There was a conveniently

* Thomas Pringle.

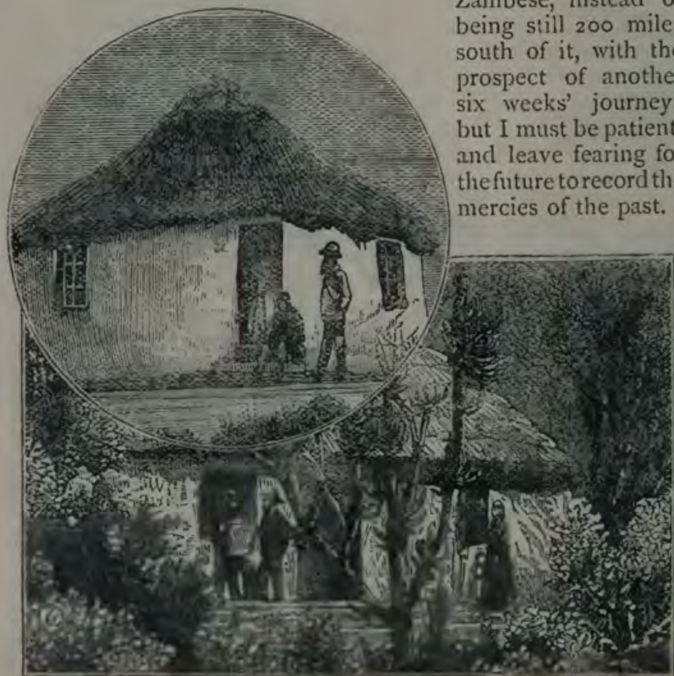
shaped rock near the mouth of the well, into which the water for the oxen was poured. For a small piece of tobacco each, the Bakalahari assisted us to clear away the mud from the second well; but after all our trouble I found that the supply of water from both was not sufficient to allow all my oxen to drink at once. So I separated the party on Monday, sending on in advance the two waggons which were driven by the Hottentots. The rest of the party left Nkowane on Tuesday.

On Wednesday night, while toiling diligently through the deep sand, we came unexpectedly upon one of the waggons which had started a day before us. Its solitary guardian in the desert was its Hottentot driver. He explained that he had sent on his oxen with the other waggon, as they would pull no longer. But he was too impatient, and anxious to use his long whip, to make a good driver. Finding that we had ten loose oxen that were capable of being inspanned, although some were too old and others too young for the yoke, we made up a "span" or team, and resolved to do our best to save the other oxen a double journey. So the Hottentot and I did the driving between us, he with the whip, whilst I supplied the indispensable calling of the names of the oxen, and general shouting. To the driver's astonishment the waggon which fourteen good oxen could not pull, ten very inferior animals were now pulling. But then the difference was that Hendrik was not now allowed to thrash right and left, but only such oxen as were not pulling. There is more skill required to drive a heavily laden waggon through deep sand than one would imagine. I pity the traveller who finds himself in this wilderness with either bad oxen or unskilful drivers.

At Lotlakane we found interesting traces of our friends Messrs. Helmore and Price. My friends had rested here for a few weeks. Their enclosures were still standing; and the Masarwa (Bushmen) living here explained to me where the different waggons had stood. They also described to us the great suffering of our friends from thirst in crossing the desert out of which we had now happily come. Mrs. Helmore, writing in the hut beside which my waggon stood, described those sufferings to a sister of her husband in

England, in a letter from which I give the following extracts :—

"I write this in a pretty little hut, 14 feet by 12, built by your brother. The walls are of palmyra wood, and it is thatched with palmyra leaves, so it answers literally to the name we have given it—*Palmyra Lodge;* and though rough-looking on the outside it forms a delightful shelter from the scorching rays of the sun. I should tell you that it is "hartebeest" shape, and has a window at each end, with thin calico instead of glass. I only wish I were in a hut of similar description, but of larger dimensions, north of the Zambese, instead of being still 200 miles south of it, with the prospect of another six weeks' journey; but I must be patient, and leave fearing for the future to record the mercies of the past.



EUROPEAN HUTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

"The last stage of our journey has been without exception the most trying time of travelling I have experienced in Africa. We are now within the tropics, and on a journey we are more exposed than in a house; the heat during the day is intense, 102° in the shade, and often affects me with faintness and giddiness; but the early mornings are still pleasantly cool. We may expect rain this month, and are longing for it, as those only can long who have travelled through a dry and parched wilderness where no water is. Our poor oxen were at one time four, at another five, days without drink. It was quite painful to see how tame they were rendered by thirst; they crowded round the waggons, licking the water-casks, and putting their noses down to the dishes and basins, and then looked up to our faces, as if asking for water. We suffered very much ourselves from thirst, being obliged to economise the little we had in our vessels, not knowing when we should get more. We had guides, but they either could not or would not give us any information.

"Tuesday, the 6th inst., was one of the most trying days I ever passed. About sunrise the poor oxen, which had been painfully dragging the heavy waggons through the deep sand during the night, stopping now and then to draw breath, gave signs of giving up altogether. We had not gone as many miles as we had travelled hours. My husband now resolved to remain behind with one waggon and a single man, while I and the children and the rest of the people went forward with all the oxen, thinking that we should certainly reach water by night. We had had a very scanty supply the day before; the men had not tasted drink since breakfast until late in the evening. We divided a bottleful among four of them. There now remained five bottles of water; I gave my husband three, and reserved two for the children, expecting that we should get water first. It was a sorrowful parting, for we were all faint from thirst, and of course eating was out of the question; we were afraid even to do anything lest exercise should aggravate our thirst. After dragging slowly on for four hours the heat obliged us to stop. . . . About sunset we made another attempt, and got on about five miles. The people then proposed

going on with the oxen in search of water, promising to return with a supply to the waggon, but I urged their resting a little and then making another attempt, that we might possibly get near enough to walk on to it. They yielded, tied up the poor oxen to prevent their wandering, and lay down to sleep, having tasted neither food nor drink all day. None of us could eat. The water was long since gone. . . . Henry at length cried himself to sleep, and the rest were dozing feverishly. It was a beautiful moonlight night, but the air hot and sultry. I sat in front of the waggon unable to sleep, hoping that water might arrive before the children awoke on another day. About half-past ten I saw some persons approaching: they proved to be two Bakalahari bringing a tin canteen half full of water, and a note from Mrs. Price, saying that having heard of the trouble we were in from the man whom we had sent forward, and being themselves not very far from the water, they had sent us all they had. The sound of water soon roused the children, who had tried in vain to sleep, and I shall not soon forget the rush they made to get a drink. There was not much, but enough for the present. I gave each of the children and men a cupful, and then drank myself. It was the first liquid that had entered my lips for twenty-four hours, and I had eaten nothing. The Bakalahari passed on, after depositing the precious treasure, saying that though they had brought me water they had none for themselves. They were merely passing travellers. I almost thought they were angels sent from Heaven. All now slept comfortably except myself; my mind had been too much excited for sleep.

"At two o'clock I roused the men, telling them that if we were to make another attempt to reach water no time was to be lost. They were tired and faint, and very unwilling to move, but at last they got up, and began to unloose the oxen and drive them off without the waggon.

"I remonstrated, but in vain; they had lost all spirit, 'lipelu li shule,' as the Bechwanas say. I was obliged to let them go, but they assured me I should have water sent as quickly as possible, and the cattle should be brought back

again after they had drunk. They knew no more than I did the distance to the water.

"When they left us, I felt anxious at the thought of

KUKAMA (GEMSBUCK OR ORYX).

perhaps spending another day like the past; but they had not been gone more than half an hour, when I saw in the bright moonlight a figure at a distance coming along the

road. At first I could not make it out, it looked so tall, but on coming nearer, who should it prove to be but my servant-girl Kionecoe, eighteen years of age, carrying on her head an immense calabash of water! On hearing of our distress she volunteered to assist us. She had walked four hours. Another servant had set out with her, but as he had driven the sheep the day before a great distance, without either food or water, he became so exhausted that he lay down under a bush to rest; and on the girl came, alone, in the dead of night, in a strange country infested by lions, bearing her precions burden. Oh, how grateful I felt to her! Surely *woman* is the same all the world over! She had only lived with me since June, was but an indifferent servant, and had never shown any particular attachment to the children; but this kind act revealed her heart, and seemed to draw us more closely together, for her conduct since then has been excellent. I made a bed for her beside me in the forepart of the waggon; and the children having slaked their thirst with the deliciously cool water, we all slept till six o'clock. I made coffee, and offered some to Kionecoe and her companion, who had now come up. At first they declined it, saying the water was for me and the children. I had now the happiness of seeing the children enjoy a meal of tea and biscuits; and then once more filling up my two bottles, I sent the calabash with the remainder of its contents to my husband, who by this time stood greatly in need of it. The distance was about twelve miles. I afterwards found that we were about the same from the water.

"Another hot day had now commenced, and I had only the two bottles of water. About noon a horseman rode up, leading a second horse with two water-casks and a tin canteen on his back. This was a supply for your brother, sent by our kind fellow-travellers, Captain and Mrs. Thompson,* who had heard of our distresses from the Prices. . . . While we were preparing the coffee, up came a pack-ox, sent by Mr. Price, with two water-casks for me, and soon after some Bakalahari arrived with a calabash; so

* An English lady and gentleman who, on their marriage tour, travelled from Cape Town to Walvisch Bay, *viâ* Lake Nghabe.

GIRL CARRYING CALABASH.

we had now an abundant supply, and my heart overflowed with gratitude to our Father in heaven, who had watched over me and mine, as over Hagar of old, and sent us relief. I related that and other instances of God's care to the children the day before, and exhorted them to pray to their heavenly Father, and rest assured that He would send us help. They now referred to the subject, saying 'it was just as I had said.' . . . Captain and Mrs. Thompson rode up to the waggon in the afternoon, to see if they could be of any further assistance, and brought a little milk for the children. . . . A span of oxen passed me in the middle of the day, going to fetch my husband, and about half-past nine on Wednesday night a span arrived for us. Next morning we reached the water, where Mrs. Price had kindly prepared a substantial breakfast. My husband did not come up till the evening."

CHAPTER V.

JOURNEY NORTHWARD: NATIVE VASSALS.

WE had now come into contact with the vassalage, or slavery, which is practised by the Bechwanas. There are two distinct races held in subjection in this country, and we now met with specimens of both at every fountain. Those called Bakalahari are Bechwanas whose tribes have been worsted in former contests, and who, not able to preserve their own independence, "khetha" or pay tribute to a powerful neighbouring chief. Like their rulers, these vassal-Bechwanas are not all of one tribe, nor do they all speak the same dialect of Sechwana. Within the memory of those now living, tribes once independent have been reduced to the condition of Bakalahari; while others who had been long Bakalahari have been called, through the grace of their chief, to the privileges of citizenship, and appointed a place in the town of the tribe. The other subject race is that of the Bushmen, called Barwa by the Bechwanas in the south, and Masarwa by those in the north of the country.

The relationship between the Bakalahari and their masters is much more friendly than that between the same masters and their Bushmen. The helplessness of the Bakalahari excites the contempt of their owners, and they

are usually spoken of with the diminutive form of the word —Bakhalahatsana; but otherwise they are regarded as "bathu hela" ("like other people"). The master therefore, knowing that he can trust to instincts and traditions similar to his own in the mind of the Bakalahari, sends his flocks and sometimes his herds to be taken care of by his vassals. The children of the Bakalahari luxuriate in goat's milk, while their father imagines himself considerably elevated in society as he gazes night and morning on the cattle as they enter and leave their pen. When the owner of the stock now and then makes his appearance at the post, he speaks of the cattle as if they belonged to the Bakalahari; and when it is his intention to sell or to slaughter a certain animal he usually announces it, and sometimes even goes through the form of asking permission to do so, although all the cattle belong to himself. The pastoral instincts of the Bakalahari thus find full occupation, to the satisfaction of their lord, and to the advantage of the vassals. Then the master provides dogs for hunting—the ivory and ostrich-feathers, the furs and skins, to be his, the meat to belong to the Bakalahari. And when he visits the little settlement, it is usually with a little present of some tobacco or wild hemp for smoking, or a clasp-knife or a few beads, which he has purchased from a trader. He now receives the "tribute" of his vassals, staying with them a longer or shorter time according to his taste. As among Europeans, there are some Bechwanas who are happiest when "out of town" and in the hunting-field with their vassals. It is only at the positive command of the chief in time of disturbance that such Nimrods reluctantly return to their houses in the town.

But the Bushmen seldom secure much liking or consideration from their Bechwana masters. "Masarwa a bolotsana thata" ("Bushmen are great rascals"), "Masarwa ki linoga hela" ("Bushmen are perfect snakes"), are remarks often heard among the Bechwanas. The fact is, there is less in common between the two races. Their allegiance is never so genuine, and while they yield tribute they hardly conceal their contempt for their masters. The Bushman is of use only in hunting. When his Bechwana master arrives

he takes possession of the little huts, and receives all skins, &c., which the family have collected. And now, they hunt every day in company, the Bushmen with their spears, bows and arrows, and dogs—their master with his spears, or, in recent years, with his gun. Woe betide the Bushmen should it be found out that they have hidden away part of the produce, or that, instead of keeping the skins for his master, the Bushman has ventured to make with some of them a mantle for himself or his wife! Thus Bushmen are continually on the alert for the arrival of their masters in the country; and should they cross a path, and see his foot-mark on it, they are able to recognise it at once, and if possible will hasten home before him to hide that which must not meet the eye of their lord.

Looked at in this connection, it is not difficult to account for the well-known reluctance of Bechwana chiefs to allow traders and travellers to pass through their country, as it is well known that the vassals do not hesitate to keep back part of the produce from their masters, and barter with it themselves as soon as a European waggon makes its appearance. On the present journey I was frequently offered beautiful ostrich feathers for a bit of tobacco or a few strings of beads. Explaining to them that trading was not my object, I directed them to Mebalwe, who, having previously passed through the country in the service of Dr. Livingstone, had made the necessary preparations for this trade before we started, and was able to purchase on his own account all that came to the waggons. It has been found impossible by the Bamangwato to stop this "contraband" trade. They began with severity, and put some of their vassals to death for daring to sell what belonged to their masters. But they found that severity did not answer their purpose, and so the masters now are in point of fact competitors with the European hunters and traders for the purchase of ivory and feathers from their own vassals. Of course they do not acknowledge that they occupy such a position, but the "presents" which they now give their vassals are every year more handsome, and the whole transaction assumes more the appearance of barter than the levying of tribute. In some instances masters have intrusted

MASARWAS AT HOME.

their Bakalahari and Bushmen with guns. The latter take to this weapon at once. What with their skill in stalking, and their steady aim, they soon excel their master in its use. Public opinion is against putting such dangerous weapons into the hands of the "lower classes," as an unsafe proceeding. But as it is to the decided advantage of the masters, it is increasingly practised.

It is very interesting to observe how this vassalage becomes all but impracticable, and melts away before the teachings of Christianity and the increasing intercourse which now obtains among tribes that were formerly isolated. The missionaries in the southern district of Bechwanaland did not preach directly against this system; but they taught that the love and mercy of God were toward all, and that God was no respecter of persons. It was the custom even in the olden time, and is still in heathen towns, that if a slave regarded himself as ill-used by his master, or thought that his life was in danger, he might flee to the chief, and cast himself upon his protection. If the master complained of was a favourite with the chief, he would formally reprove him, and persuade the slave to return to his service. But if a charge of cruelty was proved against a master with whom the chief had a quarrel, he would at once release the slave from his obligations to him, and provide for him another master. It can readily be seen that Christianity, finding the slave enjoying such an amount of liberty, would speedily secure for him more. It is one of the faults which the heathen prefer against the partially-Christianised district in the south, that there the "batlanka," or slaves, are no longer under their masters' control, as in the times of undisturbed heathenism. Christianity thus quietly lets the oppressed go free, and breaks every yoke.

But while under this system of appeal to the chief, the lot of these vassals is just bearable in time of peace, it is beyond conception wretched in time of war. I do not mean war among themselves in the country; they are too poor to quarrel seriously, or for a long time: but they are deeply interested in all the political questions of the town, being part of the property of the headmen—a quarrel

among whom is often followed up in the country in a way which astonishes as it shocks the Christian man. The contest for the possession of certain villages of Bakalahari or Bushmen is a fruitful source of strife in Bechwana towns. The vassals with all their belongings are the subject of litigation and endless jealousies; and it needs all the skill

NATIVE WARRIORS.

of a chief to settle these matters between greedy and plausible rivals. When a decision is come to, the poor people in the country are hastily "lifted" by the successful litigant, to be brought back again should he afterwards lose his case. When rival chiefs fight for supremacy in the same tribe, the condition of the harmless vassals is wretched in the

extreme. They are then scattered and peeled, driven hither and thither, and mercilessly killed, as the jealousy, caprice, or revenge of their masters may dictate. It is quite fair in such a struggle to kill all the vassals, as it would be to lift the cattle, of him who cannot be displaced from his chieftainship. And so with the varying fortunes of a "civil

A BUSHMAN'S KRAAL.

war," the vassals might be attacked by both parties in turn.

Again, when one Bechwana tribe attacks another, the Bushmen and Bakalahari belonging to both are placed in the same category with cattle and sheep—they are to be "lifted" or killed as opportunity offers. In such cases, therefore, all Bakalahari and Bushmen flee into wastes and

inaccessible forests, and hide themselves until the commotion is past.

We found an illustration of the terror and mistrust in which these people live when we reached the fountain of Lotlakane. A "civil war" was still going on, in an intermittent fashion, between Macheng and Sekhome, for the chieftainship of the Bamangwato tribe. It mattered little to these serfs who the chief was to be; with them the important question was, to escape both parties while the strife was going on. And so for the first night we saw nobody at Lotlakane; but in the morning my men told me that there were footmarks of Bushmen all round our camp. They had come in the night to satisfy themselves that there were no Bamangwato in my party, before they ventured to come amongst us. How they distinguished as the men lay asleep between the two Bakwena whom I had hired from Sechele and Bamangwato, I know not; but their midnight inspection was held to be satisfactory, and next day several made their appearance at our waggon. It was affecting to witness the earnestness with which they asked if the Bamangwato were still fighting among themselves.

While travelling through their country we always invited the Bakalahari and Masarwa to join us at our morning service on Sunday. The women laid aside their ostrich eggshells; the men their weapons and the hunting-bag, without which they never travel, and joined our little congregation. Mebalwe was wont to admonish them that "they must sit still; we were going to pray, and to proclaim the Word of God." But when the singing began they usually struck up conversation with one another as long as it lasted, no doubt criticising our doings, and probably remarking that this was the white man's way to make his encampment pure and safe. Such is the explanation which I have heard given of our worship. What message has the evangelist to these children of the desert? Nowhere have I felt my heart more thrilled than when delivering to them as clearly as I could the one Gospel of peace and goodwill. My "sermons to Bushmen" consisted generally of a simple recapitulation of the leading truths of Revelation. I attempted

to make known to them what man discovers not for himself, but what the Father of all has mercifully revealed. In order to address men on the highest subjects with effect, it is necessary that the preacher should know something of the inner life of his audience, their hopes and their fears. In the case of the Bushmen, ignorance of their language has always been a drawback to those who have come into contact with them. But careful observation of their habits, as well as seeking to draw them out in conversation, ought to lead to some knowledge of their character. I can say with truth that no class of people excited my curiosity, or engaged my attention as a traveller in their country, more than the Bushmen. Their outward degradation, their ignorance of agriculture, their prejudice against the possession of live stock,* must not discourage the student of their character from continuing his inquiries.

On all subjects lying within the range of the Bushman's observation you will meet with extreme shrewdness and intelligence. The Bushman has the most extensive knowledge of the *materia medica* of the country. If my own medicines were not available, I would trust myself sooner to the care of a Bushman than to any other native doctor. Nothing can exceed the skill and intelligence of the Bushman as a hunter and an observer of the habits of the wild animals. And as to religion, if I am not greatly mistaken the Bushmen are the most "superstitious" race in Southern Africa. The fact that they are so peculiarly dependent for subsistence upon what is beyond their control will perhaps account for this. With other natives the chief season of praying and necromancing begins when they have sown their corn, and stand in need of rain. But all seasons are the same to the Bushman. Therefore while he is most accomplished in everything belonging to his own way of life, and by general consent the guide and leader of every

* The Madenassana Bushmen "bina" the common goat; that is to say, it is their sacred animal, as the "kwena" or alligator is to the Bakwena. Now just as it would be hateful and unlucky to the Bakwena to meet or gaze upon the alligator, so the common goat is the object of "religious" aversion to these Bushmen; and to look upon it would be to render the man for the time impure, as well as to cause him undefined uneasiness.

hunting party of which he is a member, he constantly seeks by charms and by spells to supply his own deficiencies. Whether the European has bent his knee in prayer or not before he springs to the saddle in the morning of a hunt, the Bushman has not failed to consult his "oracles." Approaching with mysterious and confident mien, he announces to the hunters that if they will only proceed in a given direction they will find the game they seek. In short, he has assumed the office of "seer" for the party. He has been inquiring of his dice or charms, and announces to you their verdict with confidence. If you still hesitate, he explains to you that Morimo has told him where the game is, and at the same time shakes the dice which he carries round his neck. If you smile, and say that these are merely bits of ivory or bone, he assents at once, and would readily dispose of them to you for a few beads. But then at the earliest opportunity he would repair the deficiency, and replace them with another set. The bits of bone are nothing, he will admit, but through them he "makes inquiry" of the ex-human if not super-human. No party of Bushmen would consent to take the field without these charms. Whoever fancies he is self-contained, and able in himself, without prayer, or without divining, to cope with the difficulties of human existence, the Bushman in Bechwanaland is not. I believe life to a Bushman without this professed addressing something out of and beyond himself would be complete misery.

The relics of a tribal rite are also to be found among these Bushmen. If you point to the pierced cartilage of the nose, he will explain to you that that was done when he was introduced to Bushman manhood. He here uses the word "rupa," which in Sechwana means the introductory ceremony of circumcision. This, then, is to him what circumcision is to the Bechwanas.

Certain marks on his face, or bits of wood on his hair, or tied round his neck, are medicines or charms to be taken in sickness, or proximity to lions, or in other circumstances of danger. This is the fetichism which is common throughout Africa at the present time, as it was in Europe in past ages, and which is not unknown in our own day in rural districts

of England and Scotland. If you point to the dice, the Bushman will say that they are "Lilo tsa Morimo oa me" ("Things of my God"). He will add: "Lia impuléléla mahuku" ("They tell me news"). If he does not know much Sechwana, he will point to them and say, "Se se Morimo, se" ("This is God"). As in the other cases, this explanation is to be regarded in its connection with such views of Morimo as are known to these Bushmen. The Bushman means to say that what Morimo is to the Bechwanas and

"WHERE THE CARCASE IS."

to you, his dice and charms are to him. To affirm from such data that the Bushmen have a definite notion of Morimo (God) would be to say too much; to say that their God is a bit of ivory or bone would be equally incorrect; while to affirm that they have no religion or superstition to distinguish them from the brutes that perish, is entirely false. What the Presence is whose proximity the Bushman never questions, what the Unseen is which can always be appealed to by means of dice, is a question which I cannot solve. But what I strenuously affirm, after careful observation and inquiry (chiefly the former, for the latter is often misleading), is this, that although below the other tribes as to habits of civilisation and industry, the Bushman is eminently superstitious, and is a believer in an Invisible-Agency-in-human-affairs-distinct-from-man. The Bushman will tell you in Sechwana, which is to him a foreign language, that this Agency or Agent is Morimo (God). Who has a better explanation?

In sleeping at the same fire with Bushmen or Bakalahari you are sure to be roused twice in the course of the night, or oftener, by the rising of one after the other of your companions. Their first stretchings, yawnings, and gruntings over, they assume a sitting position in a row round the fire, which they replenish with fresh logs. Sometimes they fall asleep in this position, and you see them nodding over the flames. When they lie down again you take notice that it is always in the opposite position with reference to the fire from that which they last occupied. Thus if they had their backs to the fire before they got up, they now turn their faces to it. Having no blanket or covering whatever, except a little skin mantle, which just covers their shoulders, it is only by repeated "turnings" that they are able to keep up heat in their bodies during the cold winter nights. Thus their bodies are always scorched and scarred, and generally "over-done" on both sides, by the fire at night.

Before the day is fairly broken you again hear the yawning and other demonstrations—now in a louder tone. As the light increases the restless eye of the Bushman scans the heavens with a close scrutiny. On the ground

also, as far as the eye can reach, he seems to notice every living thing. The process of roasting meat on the live coals now commences; and as this early breakfast goes on each one parenthetically mentions what he observes. At length one starts to his feet. What has he descried? After great effort you can just see "manong," or vultures, in the distance sweeping over a certain spot. Seizing their weapons, two or three men start at once in that direction; they hope to get there before the lion has finished the antelope or zebra, which has been his midnight meal. If they find the killer of the prey still at his repast, with a jackal venturing to approach from the side opposite to the lion, while hyenas or younger lions bide their time at a distance—the Bushmen, who have been talking loudly as they approached, to give due notice of their arrival, now shout at the top of their voice, rattle their spears, break off decayed branches from trees, and shake their mantles, to frighten the lion and his courtiers, who retire into the adjoining thicket. Everything is now collected which is at all edible, and carried to the encampment. Should their visit be too late, and they find only bits of bone and hide and hoofs to reward them for their trouble, all these are collected and brought away; the vulture and the hyena or jackal finding little to pick up after the visit of the Bushmen. Thus although Bakalahari object to lions in their vicinity, on account of the live stock which they are rearing for themselves and their masters, the Bushmen do not at all object to this proximity, for they have a good deal to gain from it, and if they only keep up a good fire at night in self-preservation, they have nothing whatever to lose.

CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEY NORTHWARD: A LION COUNTRY.

UR oxen having had several days' rest in a district well adapted for grazing, we left Lotlakane on Monday, the 6th August, and reached Nchokotsa late at night. It is situated at the side of what must have been a large lake, but is now perfectly bare and dry. The water here is impregnated with salt, and its name testifies to its effects on the system—the verb "chokotsa" meaning to wash or rinse out any vessel. There are three separate wells or "eyes" to this fountain; the upper one being so unbearably nauseous that the oxen, although very thirsty, would not drink the water. The second was a little improved by percolation, and the oxen drank from it. The third well, a little farther down the slope, was cleaned out for our own use. It was the best of the three, but this "best" was very bad. We could not drink coffee made with it. I swallowed a cup of water at breakfast, as a child takes a dose of medicine, and Mrs. Mackenzie drank nothing as long as we were here.

We had now reached the point where my men's knowledge of the road failed them, and it was therefore necessary for us to obtain the assistance of guides. But how was this to be done? We saw the fresh footmarks of Bushmen at the fountain; but no one ventured near our waggon. Accompanied by one of the men on horseback, I spent the morning in hunting for Bushmen, and at length succeeded

in finding one. He gave us a short race, but on our nearer approach coolly sat down, apparently satisfied as to our trustworthiness, and afterwards consented to accompany us to the waggons. We found that my men had been even more successful, for there were now dozens of Bushmen at the fire, and as many women in a group in front of my waggon, gazing upon the wife of a Lekoa (Englishman) with her little child. The driver of my waggon explained that he had observed a woman creeping up to the fountain, and had seized her; "when to my surprise," he added, "every bush around me produced its Bushman, although I had not seen one before." This skill in hiding himself from view with little or no cover is possessed by the Bushman in a superlative degree. Holding a bit of bush or a bunch of grass before him, he will stalk the ostrich or other game upon a plain entirely without cover, and get within range, the game all the while looking at him. Let a clumsier man try the same thing, and they set off at once. As soon as the Bushmen were assured that the waggons belonged to an Englishman, and that amongst all the servants there were no Bamangwato, they came to the camp without hesitation. Khosimore also informed me, with some pride, that he had discovered the waggon-track; and going with him I found, proceeding northwards, several faint traces of it in the sand and rubbish collected round the roots of small bushes. I learned afterwards that Messrs. Helmore and Price's waggons had taken a course to the west of this in leaving Nchokotsa, so that the track discovered by this sharp-eyed individual must have been one of an earlier date.

On Friday, the 10th, we crossed the Zouga or Botletle river, which here runs nearly due east. At the ford here I found it nearly dry and brackish. We sent our oxen and drinking-vessels some distance up the river, where there was more water in its bed, and where we found the water was quite fresh.

On Saturday morning we reached Kube, where we resolved to spend the Sunday. We dug out the fountain, and put a thorn hedge round it, to preserve the water from the game, which was here very abundant. Mosisane, the chief of the little village, and his people, assisted in the digging,

declining to use the spade which I offered them, it being "only for white people." On Sunday, as the men came up to our morning service, the dust washed off, and dressed in their best clothes, the contrast between them and Mosisane and his people was sufficiently striking. And yet socially they were people of the same standing. Most of my Kuruman men were Batshwene, who were vassals of the Batlaping,

WAGGON-TRAVELLING: A HILLY COUNTRY.

and who to this day are regarded by that tribe as inferiors. Mosisane and his people were also vassals of a Bechwana tribe. But what a difference, not only in the appearance, but in the thoughts and life of the two, as they sat down together in the shade of the waggons to worship God! Some of the vassals from the south had become free indeed, through faith in Jesus Christ; and here were the same

elements to work upon, only how could they "believe in Him of whom they had not heard"?

The service over, my herd-boy advanced with part of the flesh of a young kukama on his shoulder. As he threw down his burden upon the heap of firewood, he told me with some pride that the kukama had been run down and killed by a very fine dog which I then possessed. Norval seemed to understand what was being said, and came up wagging his tail. I said to the boy that I hoped he had not forgotten the "great day" and his cattle at the same time, and gone hunting with the dog? "No; the dog had gone of his own accord only," was the answer. This feat on the part of Norval was the cause of my losing him. The Bushmen thought he would exactly suit them; and when I crossed the Ntwetwe salt-pan my dog was missing. I afterwards heard where he was, and sent one of my men for him; but his new master secreted him in the reeds of the Botletle; and when my man arrived he admitted that he had had the dog, but declared it had been killed while baiting a buffalo. He sent me a few jackal skins to "make my heart white" on the subject. But the dog was alive long after this, and its fame for strength and daring spread along both banks of the river. The Bushmen do not covet anything about an Englishman's waggon so much as a good dog. Their own dogs are always in good condition —a perfect contrast to those of the Bakalahari, or even the Bechwanas, which I have often seen dying of hunger before their masters' eyes.

No one in our party missed Norval so much as our little child, to whom his gentleness and patience knew no bounds. The little hands daily poked his eyes and played with his formidable mouth and teeth, while the party rested in the heat of noon-day. Another camp-follower, exceedingly tame before, seemed to become more so after the loss of our dog. This was a milch-goat, which I had purchased at Kanye for our child's special behoof. When crossing the dryest parts of the country, this useful creature never failed to give a little milk, which made the oatmeal porridge of our child very nourishing as well as palatable. We were never so destitute of water as not to have a basinful with

which to make ourselves believe that we had washed our faces. On such occasions the goat knew what was going on in the waggon, and was ready to drink up water which had already been so usefully employed.

The first night after leaving Kube we slept in the middle of Ntwetwe, an immense plain, entirely devoid of vegetation, except here and there a sandy mound covered with a rough kind of grass. In the morning we found that on every side, as far as the eye could reach, there extended what has probably been the bed of an inland sea, but is now completely dry in winter, and gradually curtailed and intersected by the advance of vegetation. Farther north I came upon a "pan" in which this process had been completed; vegetation extended from one end of it to the other. Ntwetwe becomes impassable in the rainy season, still receiving, it would seem, a considerable quantity of water from the drainage of the surrounding country, although not nearly so much as before.

I found here unmistakable marks of the difficulties into which Mr. Helmore's waggons had got. They had sunk down in the mud; and here lay broken waggon-poles and other furniture, indicative of an ox-waggon in a "stick-fast" condition. At the north side of the pan we halted at the first mowana or baobab-tree on this road, the large trunk of which I found well covered with names. I was glad to see that of Mr. Price, the incision still looking fresh. In another part of the tree—the letters nearly closed by the growth of the bark—I saw the initials "L." and "O.," with a date which I have forgotten; but no doubt commemorative of one of Livingstone and Oswell's visits to the interior. Leaving this mowana halting-place, we came in the evening to a Masarwa village, the chief of which was called Mosheu. As usual we had to procure fresh guides.

On Wednesday we had no water for the oxen, although we passed small wells which supplied our own wants. This forenoon, as very often on this journey, I had to exercise my skill as waggon-mender. I had to put in a false nave in one of the wheels, which, with my materials, was a most difficult undertaking. A shoemaker or a cabinetmaker making and inserting a set of false teeth under compulsion

would be in a position somewhat analogous to mine on this occasion.

As I saw the work would take me some time, I sent on the rest of the waggons, and followed, as soon as we were ready, in the one which I had been repairing. It was long dark before we reached the other waggons; and we had no moonlight. The sand was deep, and we had some difficulty in getting the oxen to pull the waggon through it. I was heartily thankful when we reached the encampment and the day's work was over. A few minutes after our arrival, and while drinking a refreshing cup of coffee, I heard a peculiar noise in the direction in which the cattle and horses were grazing. "That's the death-cry of something!" exclaimed one of the leaders, a very sharp lad. I ordered the cattle to be brought by the herds, and secured to the waggons. Those for which we had no fastenings were driven between the waggons, and a third fire was lighted, so as the more effectually to protect them.

When the lad who herded the horses appeared, he had only one horse; that belonging to Hendrik was missing. The boy said he had seen it a little before, along with mine. As they were never known to be separate when grazing, I suspected that it was the Hottentot's horse which had given the strange cry a little before. I noticed that the oxen that were not tied up were ill at ease, and not disposed to lie down as usual. Fearing lest some sudden fright might alarm them, I sat up most of the night. But although I listened intently, I could not hear the slightest unusual sound; and troops of zebras came near to us, standing neighing and snorting, and apparently not suspecting the proximity of the lion. I roused the men in the morning, and proceeded towards the place from which we heard the "bokwalela," or death-scream, the night before. Mounting an eminence which had intercepted our view when at the waggons, we beheld, not a hundred yards from us, a large dark-maned lion raise his head from the inside of poor Hendrik's horse, in which he had been excavating. Click went one man's gun—bang went Hendrik's, who shouted, "Dats raak!" ("I've hit him!") I was for reserving our fire and going a little nearer. As soon as he saw us approaching

the lion gave up devouring; when the gun was fired he began to retreat. It was now my time to fire. My bullet threw up the dust among his feet, and caused him to change his walk into a trot; and that was all. It was as good a shot as I had often made at game; "very good for a beginner," an encouraging friend would have said; but alas! not the shot to make the lion mine, or to avenge the death of the horse. We now went up to the carcase of the horse. Hendrik, examining the spoor of the lion, said, "I told you I hit him; here is the blood on his spoor. He killed my horse; he 's sure to die." The other driver readily assented to this. I had my own private opinion that it was the horse's blood dropping from the beard and mane of the lion. A few minutes' walk on the track would have settled the question; but I had no wish to rob Hendrik of the satisfaction which his view seemed to give him.

A Bushman who came up to our fire this morning informed us that he had seen a lion's track on the waggon-road for miles, and that it came close up to the encampment. As the death of the horse took place immediately after our arrival, it would seem that the lion had been our close attendant the night before, as Hendrik and I, walking alongside the oxen, and urging them to pull—now stumbling over a thorn-bush, and now falling into a hole—toiled on in the darkness till we reached the camp-fire. The Bushmen informed us very gravely that the lions in this district were "bogale thata" (very fierce or savage). They seemed fully to believe in differences of disposition among them. And they certainly ought to be the best judges, for every petty chief here had a lion-skin on his shoulders as a mantle.

On Thursday, the 16th, we reached Mokantse's village. The people in this region are called Madenassana, although the name Masarwa is also applied to them, as to the other Bushmen. I remarked the height and strength of limb of these people, and the immense quantities of meat which were hanging about their huts, cut up into stripes and left to dry in the sun. We have here Bushmen living in plenty; the exertion necessary to obtain their food being not more than sufficient to develop their physical powers. They think as little of agriculture or a pastoral life as those

farther south; but they live in a milder climate, and with the means of subsistence within easy reach.

While I was sitting talking with a party of these Bushmen, my wife came to inform me that something unusual was going on among the men. Khosimore had refused to do his usual work, saying that there was to be a meeting of the men, and he wished to be present. On making my appearance among them, I found that the Hottentot whose horse had been killed was endeavouring to concoct a veritable "strike," and thus induce me to agree to pay for the horse. Thinking he had gained his point with the men, he addressed to me his ultimatum, which was to the effect that if I did not consent to pay for his horse, which he said had died in my service, he would go back at once to Kuruman, and all the men would go with him. He said he was not a common driver; he had come with me for the sake of hunting elephants on his return. His horse was now dead. He did not care for mere driver's wages. I waited till I should hear what the rest would say, but no one spoke. I saw through Hendrik's clumsy scheme, and said plainly I did not mean to be frightened by any one to do what I did not see to be right. I had promised to herd his horse with my own, and had done so. Where was my horse when his was taken? Were they not both together, and was not the herd in their neighbourhood at the time? If Hendrik left

"A DISTURBER OF THE PEACE."

me, I should be sorry for his own sake, as the distance was very great for one man to travel; and as to the rest leaving me because I would not do what he desired me, I had yet to hear it from their own mouth. But even if I were left alone here, or left with few men, my case was not hopeless; there was plenty of grass and water, and I should take time to consider what to do. In a few minutes Hendrik gave it up; and every one went about his work as usual. Of course no one really thought of going back; but Hendrik imagined that he could get me to pay for the horse; and some of the men seemed to think that if he got me frightened it was no matter of theirs: they would countenance his scheme so far as to give him a chance of trying it. When it failed the thing was no longer heard of. Not even Hendrik was sour-faced a day after.

On Friday, the 17th, we reached the fountain called Maila, where we found a small town of Makalaka, under Putse, a tall and very dark man. We had here another illustration of the strength of hereditary prejudices or principles as to the manners and customs of a tribe. The game was here more plentiful than we had before seen it. Vast herds of buffaloes rushed past our waggon as we approached the water. Troops of zebras and gnus were to be seen in several directions. The smaller antelopes abounded; the tracks of the rhinoceros were numerous; while elands and giraffes grazed not more than two miles from our waggons. And yet these Makalaka were starving. Although they were the best agriculturists in Bechwanaland, their tribal education did not include the arts of the Bushman. We found the dead body of a man in the forest, but slightly covered with brushwood, and were told that he had died for want of food.

"What are you eating?" I asked Putse in native style.

"Nothing whatever, sir," he replied; "*he* has not killed anything lately."

A servant standing by explained that "he" meant that the lion had not brought down anything in their neighbourhood which they might share with him.

Not long after my arrival here, I walked out alone with

my gun. The zebras were within sight, and as I had lately killed one, I had a sort of confidence in trying them again. I was not, however, successful on this occasion, and was

A MAKALAKA TRAP.

wending my way to the waggons by one ot the numerous beaten game-paths leading to the fountain, engrossed in thought, and paying very little attention to objects around

me, when something prompted me to look up at the branches of a tree under which the path was leading me. There hung at a considerable height a log of wood about four feet long and some six inches in diameter, with a large assegai at its end pointing towards the ground. A line which was attached to the upper end of this horrid weapon came down across the path in front of me, and was so secured that any animal going along the path, by disturbing the line would receive the heavily-loaded lance from above. A few more paces and this would have been my fate. I thanked God and passed on. When I came to the fountain I expostulated with Putse, the chief, for not performing a duty which is always observed by chiefs and headmen—to inform strangers of all game-pits, poisonous plants, or tsetse-fly in their neighbourhood.

"Who would have thought of your turning up over there? Did you not start in quite another direction? I am sorry; but we are so hungry that I did not wish to take down the trap till to-morrow."

Towards the north-west this plan of killing game is extensively followed; even elephants are killed by this suspended lance, which is sometimes rendered more deadly by being rubbed over with poison, like the Bushmen's arrows.

CHAPTER VII.

JOURNEY NORTHWARD: RIGHTLY GUIDED.

THE Makalaka at Maila were refugees from the cruel and bloody tyranny of Moselekatse, or rather of the Matebele soldiers; for the latter were in the habit of undertaking raids unknown to their chief against the neighbouring Mashona and Makalaka villages, for the purposes of plunder and outrage. It was their custom in such an expedition to lie in wait near the village until the earliest dawn gave light enough for their bloody work. Then rushing like furies upon the unsuspecting inhabitants, they speared every one, except young women, and children who were able to walk. From such scenes of wholesale carnage had fled the Makalaka whom I now met. They themselves had been brought up in the hereditary pursuit of tilling the soil; but their corn had been left behind in their flight, and they had not yet had time to cultivate gardens at Maila. They were therefore, as we have seen, dependent upon the trapping of game, the "leavings" of the lion, the kindness of the Bushmen, and the occasional visit of a European elephant-hunter, who would shoot down a quantity of game, for them to dry and lay up in store.

But their chief, Putse, with all his hunger, was capable of perpetrating a joke. When I asked guides of him to

go with me as far as the Zambese, he replied in a tone of affected surprise, "Why do you ask me for guides in your own country? Did not J—— V—— and the Boers who were here a few days ago tell me that all this land belonged to the white men, and that they would shortly come and occupy it? Why, then, do you ask for guides in what seems to be your own country?" I replied that the Queen of England had no desire to seize their territory; and that if Englishmen came into their country it would be for two objects—to teach them about God, which was my own purpose, or to hunt and to trade with them for ivory and feathers. I told them that if peace continued, waggons filled with the beautiful things of the white people would visit their country; and that he who was industrious would be able to purchase some of them with ivory, feathers, and skins, and even with the produce of their gardens. This assurance, which has been abundantly verified in succeeding years, gave great satisfaction; and Putse declared the news was good, if only the Matebele would let him "sleep."

Although the Dutch hunters had opened up the water, and we ourselves had also worked at it for hours, we found that unless we prevented the game from drinking in the night, we should not have enough for our oxen. Even while it was still daylight, on Saturday evening, we observed the thirsty zebras gradually approaching, that they might quench their thirst as soon as the sun went down. We lighted a fire at the water, but found that to be of no use. A rhinoceros and a troop of buffaloes dashed right down to the water. One of the latter paid for his temerity with his life. On Sunday evening, as I did not wish the men to lose another night's rest, we not only lighted a fire, but constructed something like the figure of a man in a prominent position. Some prophesied that our effigy would at once be destroyed by an angry buffalo or a black rhinoceros; but no attention was paid either to it or to the fire by creatures goaded on by thirst. There was no alternative, therefore, but again to insist upon our exclusive right to the water by the argument of the gun. As soon as their determination to drink led them too near, the men guarding the water fired at them, and caused them to withdraw.

Although many more must have been killed, only one zebra was found dead at the fountain, which, with part of the buffalo, I made over to Putse and his people; directing him, at the same time, to take up the blood-tracks of the wounded. We had thus the consolation of thinking that while driven by necessity to fire upon the game in the dark, such as might die of their wounds would be very welcome to the famishing Makalaka. During the night there was quite a procession round the fountain—a vast gathering of wild creatures in separate troops, galloping, stamping, snorting, and neighing, drawn to the fountain by thirst, and kept from drinking by fear.

After hearing that we were journeying to Linyanti, Putse brought to our camp an old Bushman, who had just returned from the district of the Mababe. Putse said it was his custom to tell strangers as much as he knew concerning the country towards which they might be journeying; and for this purpose he had brought the Bushman. "Perhaps what he tells is lies, perhaps it is truth; I shall have discharged my duty when you hear his story." The Bushman now commenced his account, which was to the effect that "the Makololo at Linyanti had killed the head man of the missionary party and his wife, with a headman of the Batlaping who accompanied the white men; and several little children had died; that the surviving white man and his wife had left Linyanti, and were now no doubt far on their way southward. Sekeletu, the chief, had poisoned an ox, and then presented it to the missionaries for slaughter. He had also administered to them poison in the native beer. The strangers had eaten of the ox and drunk of the beer, and died. Having killed the owners, Sekeletu had next seized upon their property. He had kept the best waggon belonging to the deceased teacher, and all the 'boxes' with white men's things in them. This is the news from the Mababe," concluded the Bushman.

The whole story seemed to me entirely improbable. In my confidence I smiled at my informant, and told him it was impossible that Sekeletu could have poisoned the friends of Livingstone, who were there by appointment with the Doctor. I was aware that poisoning in beer was not

uncommon in the country; but then how could they be poisoned by an ox which had been driven to their waggons alive and well, and which they themselves had slaughtered and cooked? Those only who believed in the power of "charms" could credit this. Mebalwe expressed a similar

A NECKLACE OF CHARMS.

opinion to my own, and so did the rest of the men, who were present and heard the news. The story was so mixed up with heathen customs and ideas as to render the catastrophe impossible in our eyes as a matter of fact. In itself the picture which the Bushman gave was certainly a very

dreadful one. It was a sufficiently uninviting prospect to be told that at Linyanti we should find, not our friends the missionaries, but their graves; while in the Makololo chief and people we should meet their murderers. But not one of us received the story as truth; and in a few days we had almost forgotten it. I felt it necessary to place all the "mahuku" or news on such subjects before the grown-up men of my party, lest to serious difficulties in the future there should be added their upbraidings that they had been led forward blindfold.

It was here also I heard of the extreme sufferings which my friends, upon whose track I was proceeding, had endured in the country north of Maila and Kamakama. When I asked for guides to go with me in that direction, not a single Bushman would consent to accompany me. To go without guides I felt to be quite out of the question. Pointing northwards they shook their heads, and exclaimed, "Yonder there is no water; nothing but sun; nothing but sun! That land causes the cattle to stray from the waggons; the men, too, who venture thither wander about in vain search of what is not, and hasten southwards to the fountains which they had left. All these things," they added, "did we see last year in the case of the white men who went to the Makololo. Both they and their oxen, and we who accompanied them part of the way, had well-nigh perished with thirst. If you are determined to travel on that path you go alone." I was aware from Dr. Livingstone's description of the country still before me, that to the north there was no spring or fountain till we came to the Mababe or the Sonta, and therefore travellers could only proceed on it in summer after rain had fallen. Instead of giving the detail of the sufferings of my friends, with which the Bushmen now supplied me, it will be more satisfactory to quote from the last letter received from Mrs. Helmore, which was addressed to one of her daughters, then at school in England:—

"NORTH OF KAMAKAMA,
Nov. 24th, 1859.

"MY DARLING OLIVE,—It is now your turn to get a letter from me; but I fear that it will be a long, long time

before you receive it, for there are few opportunities of sending or receiving letters. We have had none from you since the May ones, which overtook us at the Matlwaring, just beyond Kuruman. . . . However, we must be patient, and the letters will perhaps be doubly sweet when they do come. Although I long to hear of you, I do not feel anxious about you, my dear girls. We daily commit you to the care of your Heavenly Father, and He never disappointed those who trust in Him. I hope that you, dear Olive, are setting the Lord always before you. As the eldest of the family, you will have a strong influence over the rest. O seek especially to guide your sisters, dear Annie and Emily, in the way of life. I look forward with delight to the time when we shall be all united again; but still I think it is your duty to remain in England as long as you can. You may never go there again.

"You see we have not yet got to our journey's end. It is a long journey indeed; but we have had so many hindrances from waggons breaking, cattle wandering, fatigue, drought, and other causes. We have been already twenty weeks on the road, and shall be three or four weeks yet. Six weeks ago, on the river Zouga, dear little Willie was taken ill with fever, and for several days we scarcely thought he would recover; fever was very high, with delirium. He is now getting well again, and to-day is playing on the bed with Selina and Henry for the first time. He is, however, still so weak on his legs that he has to be carried about like an infant. A fortnight after Willie had been taken ill, dear Lizzie was seized with fever, and erysipelas in the back, but she too is getting well now; so you see, dearest Olive, you have much to be thankful for, as well as to pray for. Selina and Henry are well, and all send their love to you all. I need not tell you much about our journey, as you have papa's journal. . . . We meet with some beautiful flowers. I often wish it were possible to transport them to you. Few of them have much scent alone; but about sunset their united fragrance is delicious.

"*Monday, Nov.* 28.—Yesterday dear little Eliza Price was baptised by your papa. We had a pleasant English service. It was quite a treat in the wilderness. The

Bechwanas were present as spectators, and seemed interested. Papa has service in Sechwana regularly every Sunday. . . Our cattle, at least some of them, have been lost ever since last Monday. Four men were seeking them three days and nights, and returned with some of them—without having tasted food all that time. They lost their way, which it is very easy to do, as the country is covered with forests and thick bush. Now another party is out after the rest of them. This is their third day. We have had no road for many weeks. Some of the party have to go before, sawing down trees, and chopping bushes to make room for the waggons to pass, and after all we frequently become entangled; so it is very slow work. There are no wild beasts here except elephants, and occasionally troops of zebras. The latter we sometimes manage to shoot. They are excellent eating; so is the gnu.

"*Dec.* 26.—A happy Christmas to you, my children! It is now nearly a month since I laid down my letter to you, dear Olive; yet, strange to say, we are only *five miles* nearer to our journey's end than we were then. I told you that a party of our men had gone out in search of some of our oxen, which had been stolen by the Masarwa, or Bushmen. They returned on the fourth day with all but three; one had been left sick on the road; the other fine large hind oxen the Masarwa had killed and eaten. It was a great loss, but there was no redress for it, and as our pool of water had almost dried up, we were glad to go forward. As we proceeded we found the country more and more dry, and at last we were brought to a complete standstill for want of water. One waggon was unpacked and sent back with all the casks, mackintosh bags, and vessels we could find, to bring water. All the oxen and sheep, and all the men, excepting two, were sent back likewise, and what little water still remained was divided amongst us who stayed. This was only enough for drinking, there was none to cook with, and before the waggon arrived, which was two days and nights, we were so weak from want of food that the children and I could scarcely walk. The weather was at the same time extremely hot, the thermometer at eight o'clock in the morning stood at 96°, and in the middle of

the day at more than 105°. Papa and the two men who remained went out in the evenings in search of water, and walked about all night, but they could find none. I forgot to say that Tabe stayed with one of his men, and they too searched for water; for we were unwilling to go back if there was a possibility of getting on. However, all the pools were empty, so we were most reluctantly obliged to retrace our steps. But by this time the ponds we had left were dried up too; so after travelling a day and night, and until nine the next morning, the poor cattle were so exhausted with thirst that they could go no farther, and we were compelled to unyoke them and send them on with the sheep, and most of the men, to the nearest water. We hoped that they would return that night and take us on; but day after day and night after night passed and neither men nor oxen came, and our sufferings were again very great. I was more anxious about Lizzie, who was still weak from her recent illness. I thought she would have fainted when I had not a drop of water to give her.

"One afternoon about four o'clock papa set out with two men, taking our mackintosh bags, and returned about half-past nine next morning with a supply of water. When they arrived they were so exhausted that they dropped on the ground unable to speak. Papa looked so ill that I was quite alarmed. They had walked thirty-eight miles, and carried the water fifteen miles. Having found water, parties were sent in succession each night to return the following one. Fancy every drop of water we had, for drinking, cooking, or washing ourselves, brought a distance of thirty miles going and coming!* At length, on Sunday, December the 11th, we were aroused very early by a heavy rain. We spread out a sail, and caught enough to replenish our water-vessels. This was indeed a shower from Heaven; it revived our languid spirits, and filled us with thankfulness to Him who had remembered His promise to His servants (Isaiah xli. 17). We now hoped to go on, but the clouds passed away, and the pools remained empty.

"I must now say a few words about your coming out,

* This lasted for about a fortnight.

for there are so few opportunities of sending letters to you now that I do not like to delay writing on that subject. . . . Lizzie says I am to tell you to bring some comfits, little baskets, &c., that you may have a Christmas-tree the first Christmas you are all at home. Your sisters and brothers send warmest love; so does papa. The God of Love be your Friend and Portion, my dear child!—Your affectionate mamma, ANNE HELMORE."

How true and deep the love of the Christian mother! Herself in circumstances of extreme privation, abstaining from food and drink for days for the sake of her children, knowing what it is to have only a single spoonful of water for each child left before relief came: in such circumstances she did not fail to think of the distant loved ones in her native land, who were happily ignorant of their mother's distress. Amid the harassing anxieties of such a journey she snatched time to write to them; and again the hope of re-union was expressed. It was Christmas-time when she wrote, although the glare and heat of the African sun had little in common with English associations. But her faithful and enduring heart was strong enough, not only to send a cheerful greeting, but to enjoy the prattle of the children sitting around her about a future Christmas, when their happy family was to be assembled in a mission-house north of the Zambese. She had courage to send the little sister's message about a Christmas-tree, which was to be decorated by a united family among the Makololo.

Into this land of drought I felt it would be madness to attempt to enter before rain fell. What then was to be done? The Makalaka offered to show me a route to the east, by which I should reach the Zambese near to the Victoria Falls in ten days. Asking them to point out the direction of the first fountain on this road, I found they pointed south-east from Maila—which was of course going back in our journey; for our course now was north-west, or nearly so. They informed me, however, that the second fountain was to the north of the first, and that the road afterwards steadily pursued that course. I called my men, and laid the matter before them. "One does not mind a round-

about road," said old Mebalwe, "provided we have water on it." This being the general opinion, as well as my own, I hired a party of Makalaka, who agreed to go with me to the Zambese by this eastern route.

Having settled this, preparations for starting were going forward, when Mokantse, the chief of the Bushmen, made

ZEBRAS DRINKING.

his appearance with a party of men from his village, which was at a few miles' distance. He had come to greet me, he said, before I left. One of his men, who had acted as my guide to Maila, had hinted to me the previous evening that he knew another road, to the west of that pursued by my friends of the previous year. He assured me there

was plenty of water on it; and it led to the Makololo country. As the part of the Zambese to which the Makalaka offered to guide me was considerably to the east of Linyanti, I resolved to sift this matter as far as I could, while it was still in my power to make a choice. So I assembled both Bushmen and Makalaka, and explained to them fully my position. I was a missionary on my way to teach the Makololo. I was going to join the party of last year. I had got food and clothing for them in the waggons; and my request now was to be shown the best route by which I could join them. The two chiefs and their men had a long discussion together. I could not but feel that this was a critical time in my journey. In a similar dilemma, a Bushman would have sought assistance from the Unseen by divination and charms. While my native advisers were conversing together in a language which neither I nor my men could understand, I retired in my uncertainty unto Him whose eyes are in all places, and earnestly besought His guidance and blessing at this juncture. The sequel will show whether or not the prayer was answered.

Mokantse announced the decision to which they had now come. It was that we ought to give up the road to the east, and take the route to the north-west, which his man had mentioned to me. The Makalaka agreed that "that also was a road, and that it would take us to the Makololo." My men were already assembled; so I told them that whatever road we took we must enter on it heartily, and not find fault with one another when we got into difficulties. Now was the time to speak. I then made Mokantse mention the number of waters which were on the route he proposed. He counted five, and ended with the "Great River." I asked, was it the river of the Makololo? He replied in the affirmative. All my men joined in saying that this route of the Bushmen ought to be the best. Mokantse told off two men as guides, and this perplexing question was finally settled.

CHAPTER VIII.

JOURNEY NORTHWARD: A SAD MEETING.

WE left Maila on Monday, the 20th August, and after proceeding for some hours on the track of last year's waggons, bore more to the west, on a foot-path almost invisible to the inexperienced eye, and were now practically under the leadership of the two Bushmen. Walking in front with them, I found towards evening that we were going almost due west, and in a little after that we were turning slightly to the south. I remarked that this was not the direction of the Makololo. Seeing that I had referred to a compass, the Bushmen said, "Why does not the 'selo' (or thing) of which you 'inquire' inform you of the direction of the next pool of water as well as tell you where Linyanti is? It is quite true that the Makololo live in the direction you indicate, but we are also sure that the next pool of water is in the course we are now taking."

On Wednesday forenoon we were toiling through very deep sand, under a burning sun. The pace of the oxen was becoming very slow, and the drivers seemed to be content if they moved at all. Proceeding to the front in order to question the guides about the water, I found to my astonishment that they were not visible. "Where are the Bushmen?" I asked Mebalwe, whose waggon was first that day. He in turn asked the leader, who was wearily marching at the head of the team. "Ga ki itse!" ("I don't know!") shouted the man, without turning round his head.

"Then in what direction are you taking us?" I asked, in amazement. "When I last saw the Bushmen they seemed to be going in the direction in which I am now guiding the waggons." So here we were without path, not even a game track to guide us, and our Bushmen vanished! It seemed useless to be dragging four heavily-loaded waggons through the sand without road and without guide. So we gave the oxen the benefit of our perplexity, and unyoked them while we considered what was to be done.

While the men were drinking a cup of coffee, it struck me that whatever might have been the cause of the Bushmen's desertion, the prospect of plenty of fresh meat at the waggons would certainly bring them back, if they were still near enough to hear the report of a gun. Accordingly I fired off my gun, and waiting a few minutes, as if following a wounded animal, fired again, and then watched the result of my experiment. Some time after, the men, who were now keeping a look-out, discovered one of the Bushmen making for the waggons at the top of his speed. Nothing was said until he had taken his place among the men, when he was asked why he had "thrown us away" in the desert? He said "he was killed by the sun" (*i.e.*, thirst), "and had merely gone on to drink." It no doubt seemed to him an easy thing to find out the little well, still a considerable distance ahead, and which, being inaccessible to game, had therefore no "spoors" leading to it; but it was a very different matter to strangers. I gave him some meat, so that his hurried return was not entirely in vain from his own point of view. In truth he was a welcome sight to us all. Again proceeding under his guidance, we reached the water in the evening.

We found that there was barely enough of water for ourselves in the deep well to which our guides led us. It was at the side of a large salt-pan, now grown over with grass. The water was only slightly brackish. It was still about half a day's journey to the large fountain of which the Bushmen had spoken. As we had then beautiful moonlight, I sent the whole troop of oxen forward that evening in charge of a party of men, and under the guidance of the Bushman.

A PATHLESS GLEN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

My men returned with poor accounts of the "great water" spoken of by the Bushmen; the oxen had drained it completely, without having quenched their thirst. As it was a spring, however, the men hoped that it would soon refill its basin. We reached this fountain on Friday evening, and on Saturday all hands were at work the whole day clearing out the mud and stones which had accumulated round the spring, and considerably impeded its flow. A large pen was made, so that the cattle might be kept together while the water was collecting. We found it of no use to send them to graze in charge of herds. Instead of eating, or even lying down, the oxen kept wandering about, first in one direction and then in another, always with the object of passing their herds and getting to the fountain where we were working. One animal, which was suffering the agonies of thirst, shutting its eyes, broke through the pen and rushed past the men, who tried to stop it, upon whom it would have blindly trodden had they not given way. We had just time to "clear out" from the spring when the poor creature rushed over the ledge of rock above the fountain, falling a distance of at least twelve feet, and lighting upon the rocks and stones out of which the water sprang. No sooner had it reached the ground than, now unable to rise or to move its body, it turned round its head to one of the "eyes" of the fountain, and there drank for a long time the deliciously cool water. We all believed the animal would die from the fall; and we had to lift it out of the water when it had finished its long draught. In the course of some days, however, it recovered, and was for many years afterwards a front ox in my team. In opening up this water we came upon pieces of elephants tusks and antelopes' horns, mixed up with the stones and mud, which had been closely embedded by the feet of the game. The overhanging ledge of rock had no doubt broken off these horns and tusks, as their owners, forgetting its proximity, tossed up their heads suddenly after finishing their draught of water.

On Sunday morning, 26th August, I found that if we stayed here together the oxen must endure great hardship on account of the scarcity of the water. Although it flowed

with increasing rapidity after our labours, it was still far from sufficient. The first question thus came to be, not to find the nearest way to the Makololo, but to reach a water which would suffice for all the oxen. The Bushmen living near this fountain, pointing to the west, said that after sleeping once on the way I should on the following day reach the great river of which I had heard. For the first time on my long journey I now found it necessary to go forward on Sunday. Taking one waggon and some sixteen oxen, I gave them as much water as they could drink, and then proceeded to open up a road to the river. Being now suspicious as to the tsetse, and not knowing what to make of the conduct of Mokantse and his men in misleading us as to the number of fountains on the road, and also as to its course, I thought it would be best to go forward myself with one waggon. I could not trust any of the men to lead the way where there was no waggon road, but I could depend upon them to take care of the cattle at the fountain. I directed the Hottentots, if they did not hear from me to the contrary, to start on Tuesday, and follow my track. Mebalwe was to bring up the rear with the other waggon and the weakest of the oxen on Wednesday. When I left on Sunday forenoon, some of my oxen then received the first good drink of water which they had had since the forenoon of the previous Monday at Maila! By reducing the number of oxen in one place, those which remained behind found enough water in the fountain, and a serious disaster was averted.

I now travelled under the guidance of Tiane, the chief of a small town of Bushmen, which we passed soon after leaving the water. On Sunday night there fell the first shower of rain which we had seen since leaving Kuruman. Our journey was at first through an open country, but on Monday morning we came to a dense forest, through which we had literally to cut our way with the axe. The oxen were also sorely tried with a small thorn bush, which tore their legs and the lower part of their body, and impeded our progress. After a hard day's work to all concerned, we were pleased in the afternoon to descend into a belt of larger timber, growing more sparsely and on firmer

soil. The Bushmen now assured me that I was near to the great river, and that my cattle would know no more thirst.

We were some distance in front of the waggons, my office of hewer of trees having become a sinecure, when Tiane led me to a point from which I gazed on the loveliest prospect I had yet beheld in Africa. A broad river flowed at my feet, both of whose banks were richly wooded as far as the eye could reach. The bank opposite was lower than where I stood, and I had thus an extensive view of the country on the other side, studded with large trees, in the shade of which I beheld the gnu and the zebra, the red-buck, the spring-buck, and an animal which I had not seen before, the lechwe, or water-buck. Having pulled the waggon beneath a magnificent camel-thorn, whose spreading branches enabled us to have delicious shade at all hours of the day, we unyoked the oxen, which made at once for the river. They were not content with reaching the water, but walked up to the belly in the river, and then drank their fill. We had all accompanied them to the bank, and enjoyed the delightful spectacle; and of all African scenes beheld, before or since, no one is more deeply engraven on my mind. The only disappointment was that I was not gazing upon the "Great River of the Makololo" spoken of at Maila, but upon the Zouga or Botletle.

After a few minutes' absence, Tiane announced that a boat had just arrived at the neighbouring halting-place, which was called More oa Maotu, and that the Batowana who were in it were on their way to see me. Accordingly some five or six men advanced from the river, and sitting down after the usual salutations, gave me their news. They were spies, and had been southward to observe the movements of the Bamangwato, it being feared that in the war between Macheng and Sekhome something might transpire which it would be of importance for Lechulatebe, the chief at Lake Ngami, to know. They had now fulfilled their mission, and were on their way home, having still a journey of four or five days before them. They said the place where I had touched the river was at its great bend southwards, and was its nearest point from Maila. I now gave

them my news—a plain straightforward statement of the past events in my journey, and my destination.

"Have you not heard," said the headman, "that the party of teachers who went in last year to the Makololo are all dead, except one man and two little children?"

I replied that I had heard some idle story of that kind at Maila, but that I did not believe it.

"But we left the surviving teacher at Lechulatebe's town," exclaimed the man. "His oxen were all bitten by the tsetse, and he could go no farther. We saw him with our own eyes, and we are sure that you also will be killed by the Makololo if you go there. You had better cross the river, and visit Lechulatebe, who will be glad to see you, and you will see that what we now tell you about your friends is true."

A new suspicion now crossed my mind. Taking it for granted that this story was not true, I thought I could perceive an object for telling it, namely, to get me to visit Lechulatebe. My four waggons were supposed to contain immense wealth; Sekeletu, the enemy of Lechulatebe, had already received two missionaries; it was therefore desired by the Batowana that a share of this distinction should be conferred upon Lechulatebe, and that he also should have his resident white man or missionary. I therefore conceived that these men were skilfully acting a part, and that all they told me was mentioned for the purpose of frightening me from going on to the Makololó, and of inducing me to visit their own chief. I therefore firmly expressed my intention of going on to Linyanti, and that, now I had reached the river system, I hoped speedily to complete the journey.

"What message, then, shall we take to our chief?" said the men, at the conclusion of our second interview, in which they had in vain sought to persuade me to cross the river, and give up the journey to the Makololo.

"Greet your chief very much," I replied, and say that I am now going to Linyanti, but that I hope soon to visit him as a missionary. White men are accustomed to boats in their own country, and I hope soon to be able to visit your master in one, after I have seen

my friends, and handed over to them their food and their clothing."

They seemed at a loss to understand my determined and sincere unbelief in their story, and left me, declaring I was pre-eminently "tlogo e e thata" (hard-headed or difficult to convince).

"But mark our words," said they, as they left for their boat; "as soon as we get home, and tell your friend that you are here, the teacher is sure to come to you, or to write to you, and then you will see that we have spoken truth."

"You will require to make haste," was my answer, "for in a few days I shall have left the Zouga and gone northwards along the Tamalakan."

I noticed two points of difference between the account of these Batowana and that of the Bushmen at Maila. The Bushmen said the wife of the surviving teacher was with him, and he anticipated no detention from tsetse. The Batowana said Mrs. Price had died on the way after leaving the Makololo, and that the missionary's cattle had been bitten by the deadly fly. This looked like truth, supposing the Bushmen to have visited the missionary party before the occurrence of these later disasters, which were mentioned by the Batowana. This account, with its apparent discrepancy, caused me some uneasiness; but the prominence given by all to poisoning by charms, and the well-known desire of Lechulatebe to deter Europeans from visiting his enemies, outweighed all such impressions, and I still felt fully convinced that the whole tale was without foundation.

My waggons arrived at the river in the order I had laid down for them; and I had the happiness, before the week was done, of seeing my party again united. Mebalwe explained that after I left they had scarcely enough water, but when the other two waggons followed me he had then plenty for the remainder of the troop. I resolved to give the cattle a few days' rest here, while I endeavoured to obtain information about the country before me, and especially with reference to the whereabouts of the tsetse. I was out one day with the Bushmen hunting, when they

pointed to a wooded height at some distance from the river as its nearest habitat. They said that with good guides I could go along the Tamalakan without getting my oxen bitten.

While shooting guinea-fowl one day along the banks of the river, one of the barrels of my fowling-piece burst, and damaged the first joint of one of my fingers. The piece of barrel flew into the air with a loud "whirr." I went mechanically to the place where I had seen the guinea-fowl, feeling that something was wrong, but not knowing what it was. Of course, the charge went the wrong way to kill the bird when it went through the side of the barrel. The pain in my finger soon brought me to my senses; and the ugly hole in the breech of the gun left me in no doubt. I had been trying hard to assist in supplying my own wants and those of the party by killing game, and feeling that this was not the kind of thing to establish confidence and respect, either in me or my guns, I laid the damaged gun out of sight, in the waggon, and did not mention to my men the cause of my bound-up hand. Such people believe in "lucky" and "unlucky" masters, and I did not wish them to think that they were in the employment of one who was sure to meet with disasters.

After resting more than a week at More oa Maotu, we left on Thursday, the 6th September, proceeding up the river towards its junction with the Tamalakan. On Friday we passed Mpash's village, where we had to hire fresh guides. We observed that in telling us the story of the calamities at Linyanti, a tone of remonstrance and warning was now used by the Batowana. Great prominence was always given to the necessity of our visiting Lechulatebe. Sometimes a clumsy narrator, under a little cross-questioning, contradicted himself, which confirmed us in the belief that the story was concocted, and told by some with greater ability than by others. After a man's statement had been pulled to pieces, and his warnings had fallen unheeded, he would lose all patience, and exclaim, "If you can't believe what is told you, go on to Linyanti and see for yourself."

On Saturday, while we were moving slowly along the

bank of the Zouga, and approaching Letsebogo ya Khame, I noticed a party of men advancing from the river, which was here, owing to a bend, at some distance from the course of our waggons. The strangers, without parleying with any one, went up to the leader of the first waggon and told him to halt. Now, I thought, the plot thickens, and the Batowana are making a desperate effort to accomplish their purpose. By calmness and firmness to-day all further trouble may perhaps be averted. I went forward and demanded why they had stopped my waggon in such an unceremonious manner?

"I come from Lechulatebe, the chief," replied the leader of the party, a tall handsome man, drawing himself up to his full height. "He greets you, and sends you boats, by means of which you are to cross the river."

"But who tells your master that I am to cross the river at all?" I inquired, now fully satisfied in my own mind that our surmises of fraud were about to be confirmed. "I am going to the Makololo at present, and may not turn aside. Give my greetings to your chief, and thanks for his invitation. As we are to be neighbours, I hope soon to see him and his people."

The countenance of the man assumed a bewildered expression, and turning to his companions I heard him inquire, "What can we make of this man? What shall I say to make him believe?"

"Tell him about the white man in the boat," suggested one of his men.

"You refuse to believe what everybody tells you. In that boat," pointing to the river, "there sits a white man who says you are his dear friend—the son of his father."

"And why did you not bring him with you that I might see him, if it is true that he is in your boat?"

"Because he is sick and tired, and wished to remain."

Still incredulous, and determined to stick to my course, I brought the conversation to a close by saying, "I shall go on, as I intended, to the Letsebogo (ford), where we shall sleep, and where we shall rest to-morrow (Sunday). If you have got a white man in your boat, bring him to me there, and I shall believe what you say."

Not knowing what turn events might take next, and conceiving that I had been perhaps somewhat abrupt with the men as the messenger of their chief, I now gave them a handsome present, to show that my heart was white towards them, although I was still going on to the Makololo. Highly pleased, they returned to the river; and we pursued our course to the place where I had resolved to spend the Sunday. Left to ourselves, we all felt that the crisis had now come. The stories told so persistently for the last three weeks would be tested this evening, and it would be decided whether we were being deceived, as we had imagined, or whether we were to be called upon to mourn over disaster and death. The interval was spent in canvassing the whole subject afresh—the idea now for the first time being present that it might possibly be true. Towards evening I seated myself in the front waggon to obtain the earliest solution of this mystery. The guides said we were now approaching the river again, and that the halting-place was close at hand. I shall not attempt to describe my anxiety as I gazed forward through the forest, seeking in vain for the solution of my doubts in its solemn stillness. I was roused by the exclamation of the driver, who sat beside me on the waggon, "Ki ena" ("It is he"). I sprang from the waggon, and went forward to meet some one who, I could see through the trees, was a European. At length I saw that it was my dear friend and brother-missionary, Mr. Price.

"But can all this that I hear be true?" I hurriedly asked, before I had grasped his hand.

Alas! I saw what the answer would be before I heard it: "All is true."

I had then to go back and break the news to Mrs. Mackenzie, that her beloved friends, Mrs. Helmore and Mrs. Price, were no more; and that, in short, the story which we had so often heard and disbelieved was mournfully true. This was indeed a trying hour. Hopes which had cheered us during our long journey were now dashed to the ground. In other circumstances the beauty of the camping ground which we had just reached would have

excited our attention, but other thoughts filled our minds. As the brilliance of the setting sun was now giving place around us to the darkness of night, so the bright pictures which had often filled our minds with pleasure now also gave place to one gloomy scene of desolation and of death. We sat down and wept for those who were not. Our men betokened their sympathy by the solemnity of their countenances; and the simple Makoba stood at some distance, silent witnesses of the scene.

We shrank for some time from inquiring into the details of the disasters through which our friend had passed. We observed with pain that not only was Mr. Price reduced to be the shadow of what he was when in health, but his memory was also for the time somewhat affected; and he repeated the same things several times, without being aware of it. We sought first an explanation of the means by which he had heard of our arrival. Mr. Price said that the messengers of Lechulatebe who had seen us at More oa Maotu on their way up the river from the Bamangwato country, arrived at the courtyard one day while he was present. He heard without interest the recital of their procedure as spies, and an account of the political condition of the Bamangwato. But by-and-by his attention was riveted when he heard the men state that they had arrived at More oa Maotu at the same time as "a teacher" from Kuruman, who was on his way to the Makololo. He was a red man, and had a span of red oxen. He had a wife and child, and one waggon, but others filled with things were coming after him. Mr. Price, starting up, interrupted the man, and explained to Lechulatebe that this teacher was his friend, and that he must find some way of visiting him. Lechulatebe very kindly placed his own canoe at the service of Mr. Price, who, hearing from the men that we did not credit the story of the disasters at Linyanti, but were intending, as soon as we could, to pass on to the Makololo, embarked as soon as the canoe was ready. He had the idea that he was beginning his voyage on Sunday; but in the long illnesses which he had endured, and surrounded so long by men who themselves had all been an indefinite number of days

A NATIVE BOAT.

stricken down by fever, he had lost reckoning of the days of the week, so that what he regarded as Sunday was in reality Wednesday. Mr. Helmore's two surviving little children were so pleased that assistance was near to them, that they joyfully consented to remain during Mr. Price's absence in charge of the servants, and under the special care of Lechulatebe's head wife, who was very kind to them.

Viewed in the light of our recently acquired knowledge of the true condition of our fellow-members of the Makololo mission, our past journey now assumed a consecutiveness and a oneness of purpose beyond anything which we had intended. We started from Kuruman to join the Makololo mission, of which we were members, carrying with us necessary supplies for our friends. Now it is a fact, that when I did join the only surviving member of the mission, and when I supplied him with the assistance which was indispensable to his leaving the lake, not a day had been lost between Kuruman and Lake Ngami. When the boatmen announced to Mr. Price our arrival on the Zouga, it was in reality, as such things go in Africa, an "express" to him from Kuruman. But this was not my intention, because I did not believe that Mr. Price was there at all. I thought of him and of Mr. Helmore as in the Makololo country; and when I left Maila I was under the impression that I was travelling on a new and direct route to that country.

Then the Bushmen of Mokantse at Maila undoubtedly misled me, both as to the route and as to the number of waters which we should find. Had they acknowledged that the "great river" of which they spoke was the Zouga, and not the Sonta or the Mababe, I certainly should not have taken the route proposed by them at all. They deceived me, but for what purpose? The only way I can account for their conduct is, that they determined, in what they regarded as mercy to me, to take me into the country where they knew I must infallibly either hear of my friends as having already passed south, or meet with them on their way out from Linyanti. They therefore schemed to induce me to take that route. I refused to believe the story of

disaster which they told; they seem to have determined to avert from me the evil consequences of my unbelief. I told them that I had food and clothing for my friends in the waggons; the Bushmen seem to have resolved that these articles should go into the region where their owners really were. It would be easy to take the teacher to the Zambese near the Victoria Falls, and once there he could find his way to Linyanti. But what did he want there when one-half of his friends were dead, and the rest were on the western and not the eastern road? And so those wild children of the desert took the wayward and unmanageable white man into their charge, and in point of fact led him against his will to the assistance of his friends. Kindly feelings must therefore have prompted these men as they spoke so long together at Maila before they came to a decision. We could not understand their language, but, interpreted by their after-conduct, it was that of goodwill and sympathy. They no doubt described in their speeches my seeking my friends in the north, and perhaps suffering as they had done, while the survivors sought me in the south, and lamented that they had missed me on the road. All this they most kindly resolved to prevent, and they were successful. I have the utmost pleasure in mentioning this striking instance of genuine benevolence and thoughtful kindness in the Bushmen of the African desert.

But if on the morning of my departure from Maila, Mokantse and his Bushmen arrived just in time to prevent my going to the east under the guidance of the Makalaka, and thus missing Mr. Price, the Batowana, voyaging homewards on the Zouga, reached More oa Maotu also in time to meet us there, and without delay to take to Mr. Price the news that help was near him. All of us, missionary, Bushmen, and Batowana, conspired, willingly or unwillingly, to assist Mr. Price at the earliest possible time. These circumstances produced a deep impression on every one in the party. "Sir," said one of my men, who had not professed to be a Christian, "God has been leading us to help Mr. Price." Reverently and thankfully did we acknowledge His merciful guidance. He had led us by a way which we knew not. He raised for us friends even among the wandering

Bushmen, who kindly resolved to save us from our own mistaken views, and to bring about a meeting between us and our friends.

I learned afterwards that at the time I was at Maila debating what course to pursue, Dr. Livingstone had arrived in the country of the Makololo, after performing a march on foot of more than 600 miles. Had I accepted the guidance of the Makalaka, as I at one time intended, and taken the road to Victoria Falls, it is probable that I should have been in time to meet the Doctor before he returned to the east coast. If any of the Makololo, yielding to the personal influence and advice of Dr. Livingstone, would have removed to Tabacheu, in all probability the mission would have been commenced. But in the exercise of my best judgment I gave up the eastern for what I considered a better route to the Makololo; and instead of meeting Dr. Livingstone, I met Mr. Price.

CHAPTER IX.

FEVER AND DEATH.

IN the quiet of the Sunday following our meeting with Mr. Price, we obtained from him most of the harrowing details of the history of the mission at Linyanti. Messrs. Helmore and Price arrived at that town on Tuesday, the 14th of February, 1860, after a journey of more than seven months from Kuruman. They were aware that this was perhaps the most unhealthy season of the year to enter that deadly region; but all such considerations were overcome by their anxiety lest Dr. Livingstone should have reached the country before them, and lest by their delay they should miss the opportunity of being introduced by him to the Makololo. They found, however, on their arrival at Linyanti, that they were in advance of the Doctor, who was unexpectedly detained on the lower parts of the Zambese until May, 1860. They therefore introduced themselves as the friends of Livingstone, who had come, like Ngake (the Doctor), to teach the people.

Their arrival was welcomed by the Makololo in the usual way. Large parties went out to meet them, some two or three days' journey from the town. On the day after their arrival an ox was sent for slaughter, and when next day Sekeletu himself appeared to welcome them, large quantities of beer were brought for the refreshment of the strangers. Everybody seemed pleased: the chief that his name and greatness had brought him white men to reside in his town; the missionaries that a new and populous

district of country was about to be opened up to the benign influences of Christianity.

Mr. Helmore had preached to the crowds who went out to meet the mission party on the Sunday before their arrival in the town; and every Sunday, as long as he was able, he addressed the Makololo in Sekeletu's courtyard in Linyanti. Some of the headmen who had begun to learn to read under Dr. Livingstone's tuition, now resumed their efforts under Mr. Helmore and Mr. Price. But the missionaries soon saw that whatever influence Dr. Livingstone on his arrival might be able to exert upon Sekeletu and the Makololo, in his absence no one spoke of removing to the highlands north of the Zambese. They said repeatedly that if they removed at all it would be to Lake Ngami, after they had conquered Lechulatebe, and dispossessed him of his country.

The missionaries, who were not ignorant of their danger from the insalubrious climate, lost no time in requesting Sekeletu's permission to remove to Sesheke, which Mr. Helmore thought would be a healthier locality than Linyanti, and near enough for them to hear of Dr. Livingstone's arrival as soon as it should take place. The chief, however, would not accede to this. He seemed jealous of the frequent references to Dr. Livingstone, and said that nobody must affect their arrangements with him as chief of the town. He must not be separated from those who had come to teach him and his people; they must live with him at Linyanti. Not wishing to offend Sekeletu, and hoping that Dr. Livingstone would soon arrive, and assist them in coming to some settlement of the question, the missionaries acquiesced in this decision, and Mr. Price built a temporary hut.

In less than a fortnight after their arrival at Linyanti, the whole party, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Price and a servant, were stricken down with sickness. Although many of the symptoms of poisoning, as practised by natives, were present, all these were also characteristic of African fever. It needed no poison in the ox to cause liberal rations of beef, without much exercise, to bring about that bilious state which, in the summer months, and in

such a region, would be sure to beget fever. It needed no poison in the beer, as drunk by Mr. Helmore and Mr. Price after preaching on the Sunday, to produce the pains in the head and loins and neck, of which they complained on their return to their camp. The fatigue of preaching in the open air, the unhealthy atmosphere of the town, with rank vegetation all around, and a hot sun overhead, were abundantly sufficient to produce African fever.

The scene at the camp was now heart-rending. Four sick children, guarded by a sick and enfeebled mother, lay in one place, their sick father at a little distance. "The Bechwana men were lying about," as one of them afterwards said, in describing the scene to me, "like logs of wood" —one here and another there, rolled in their blanket or "kaross," utterly prostrated by fever, unable to help themselves, and some of them in a deep stupor. The only ray of hope in the picture was that Mr. and Mrs. Price, although suffering severely, were never both ill at once. Either the one or the other was able to wait upon the sick and the helpless. Mr. Price for some time cooked food for the whole party, servants included.

On the 2nd of March, just seventeen days after their arrival, the first death took place. It was not a European who was first carried away by the deadly influences by which all were surrounded, not even one of the tender children, but Malatsi, the tallest and perhaps the strongest of the Bechwana servants, and who had been driver of Mr. Price's waggon. Five days after this, as Mr. Price was going his rounds among his helpless and often unconscious companions, he found, on touching a little face among the four children beside whom Mrs. Helmore lay, that the cold hand of death had been there before him. It was the face of little Henry Helmore—the first of the children who died. Mr. Price removed the dead from among the living, and placed the little body in the adjoining tent. His father was conscious, and on learning what had taken place, requested that Henry's mother might be spared the knowledge of this bereavement until the morning. But this thoughtfulness was not necessary, for the mother her-

self was then quite unconscious of all that was passing around her.

Henry Helmore was buried by Mr. Price on the day after his death, the 8th March; his own infant daughter, Eliza, died on the 9th in the arms of its mother, while Mr. Price lay in a wet sheet, endeavouring to get rid of an attack of fever. On the 11th, Selina Helmore followed her brother; and next day the guardian mother, wasted by disease and privation, unable any longer to smooth the pillow or cool the parched lips of her children, was released from her long watching; and heaven, sweet to all who enter it, was surely heaven twice told to Annie Helmore. She had striven long and hard; she could strive no more. In her last conscious moments she said to her husband, "she had no wish to live; she desired to go home to Jesus." In the wanderings of her fevered brain she had again seen the parched wilderness, and heard her little ones calling to her for water; and once more she fancied she was denying herself everything for the sake of those she loved. In her dreams she recalled the crossing of broad rivers, and the standing of strangers on the distant bank. Her mother's heart could not forget distant loved ones in those half-conscious days and nights. She dreamt of her home as it had been in Africa—of the new home she had hoped to see established on the Zambese; and in the midst of such dreamings and troubled feverish musings, her trustful and enduring spirit passed into the light and joy of the true home of heaven. We can surely say of Mrs. Helmore, as of the little ones whom she followed, and for whose sake she endured so much, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Death now seemed to stay its hand. Mr. Helmore and the two surviving children improved in health, and were able again to move about, and the men were now also convalescent. Mr. and Mrs. Price, however, had both severe attacks of fever about this time, from which they happily

recovered, although with reduced strength. The condition of the mission was now anxiously discussed by the two missionaries. Was it intended that they should thus build huts and settle at Linyanti? Had not Dr. Livingstone himself said that the place was destroying even the Makololo? But what could be done? Sekeletu refused to remove to the highlands of Tabacheu, and objected to the missionaries going to reside at Sesheke, insisting that as they had come to teach him they should live where he lived.

Mr. Price now proposed that they should leave their property in Sekeletu's keeping, as Dr. Livingstone had done—a pledge to the Makololo that they would return—and that they themselves should recross the Chobe, and seek again the free air of the desert, until their health should be somewhat established, and the winter months enable them to return. If, in the meantime, Dr. Livingstone should arrive, messengers could be despatched to give them intimation. This project was considered seriously by Mr. Helmore, and earnestly advocated by both Mr. and Mrs. Price. But to go back any distance seemed to Mr. Helmore like deserting his post. Something might miscarry. The Makololo might misunderstand their movements. When he arrived, Dr. Livingstone might not have time to wait for the going and coming of messengers. At Linyanti he was to meet Livingstone, upon whom he considered the success of the mission depended; at Linyanti, therefore, he would remain. The result of these consultations must have reached the Makololo, for they told Livingstone at Linyanti, in August, that Helmore had said that, whoever did, he would never turn back from the work. Now no one thought of "turning back from the work;" this idea was not present to the missionaries, their discussion being about the best method of doing the work.

But the interval of convalescence was not of long duration. After a journey to the town, about the middle of April, Mr. Helmore had a relapse of fever, which now entirely prostrated him, and claimed him for its own. Although his friends were now filled with anxiety and alarm about his condition, he himself continued to speak

confidently of getting better, and of establishing a mission among the benighted Makololo. The disease, however, was evidently making rapid advances, and while his friend still retained the power of speech, Mr. Price requested to know his wishes concerning his two surviving children. Soon his mind began to wander. He is with his flock at Likatlong; he is now in London assuming the responsibility of leader of the Makololo mission; anon all evil powers seem united to hinder his progress. He wanders in the desert in search of water, and finds none; his waggons lie in the wilderness without oxen to pull them; he stumbles over the fresh graves of those near and dear to him; but still he perseveres. The scene changes in his troubled vision, and he stands, the preacher to the heathen, delivering to them the word of life. But his preaching is interrupted; he waits for some one to assist him. Livingstone has at length arrived! He fancies he hears the greeting of his former friend and fellow-labourer. Difficulties now vanish; churches and schools arise; the imagined voice of praise, in which infants and old men join, fills the soul of the dying missionary with joy.

Slowly meanwhile the sands of life run down; dreaming gives place to torpor, and on the 21st of April torpor yields to death. But what is death to this humble and faithful servant of Christ? It is death which opens to his spirit's vision a scene fairer than he had ever dreamt of, and which itself is no dream, but a reality. He awakes from the feverish visions and torpor and death of the tent at Linyanti, to the lovely and everlasting life of heaven. He awakes to hear a voice of greeting, more cheering and thrilling than of earthly friend, the voice of Him who has been the witness of his self-sacrificing steadfastness and sincerity, his love to man and to God. It is his Saviour who welcomes him: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things: I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me."

"What were my feelings," writes Mr. Price to the Directors of the Missionary Society, "on the morning of the

22nd of April, as I followed the remains of my dear brother to the silent tomb, can better be imagined than expressed. All then fell on me, and I was so reduced that I was hardly able to move, and my poor wife had entirely lost the use of her limbs."

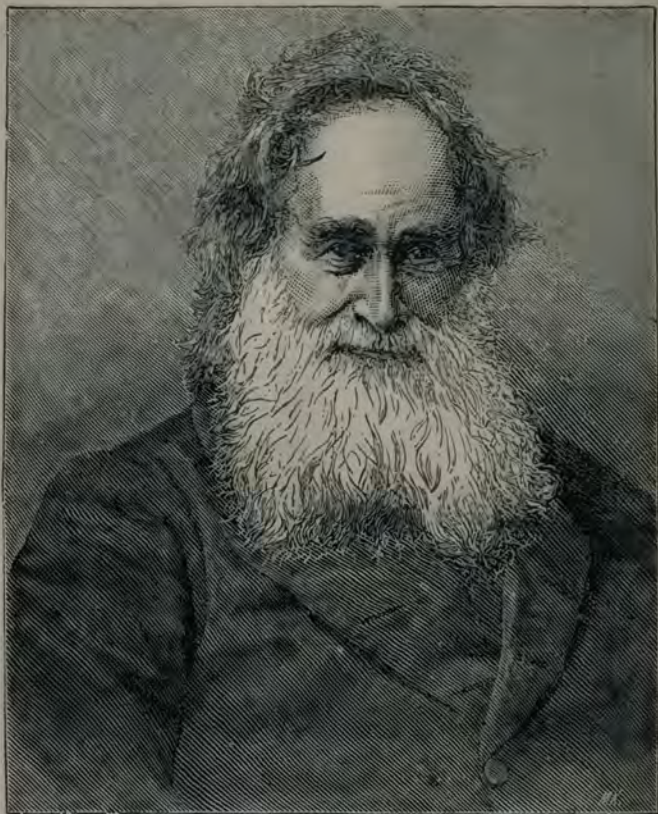
Tabe, a deacon of the church at Likatlong, died on the 11th of March, and on the 19th Setloke, a Christian native, also from Likatlong. Tabe had early been converted from heathenism, and being a person of some ability, as well as of influence in the town, his earnestness and zeal led others to follow his example. He was a teacher of the school and exhorter of the people at Likatlong before the arrival of Mr. Helmore at that station, and while the people were still connected as an out-station with Griqua Town. From the first he was one of Mr. Helmore's right-hand assistants; and it was thought a very happy arrangement when one possessed of so many years' experience consented to join his missionary in what every native in South Bechwanaland from the first regarded as a hazardous enterprise. Had a mission been established, the service of such a man would have been very great.

It was the impression of Mr. Price, as well as of the Bechwanas who accompanied the mission party, that the deaths at Linyanti were occasioned by poison administered by the Makololo, and not from fever. But if African fever supplies us with an adequate cause for these deaths, it is unnecessary that we should seek a furthur reason in the occult administration of native poisons in an ox and in beer. And unfortunately ten years' experience in a district annually visited by this disease has brought to my knowledge more than one instance of similar disaster among trading and hunting parties, equally deadly, although not equally extensive. Then it must be borne in mind that the missionaries reached Linyanti at one of the most unhealthy seasons in the year, and that they were completely exhausted by the privation and fatigue of their journey. Instead of a life of hardship and daily bodily exertion, they and their men had regular supplies of food without much exercise. In short, all the circumstances were in the highest degree calculated to produce fever.

The suspicion of foul play on the part of Sekeletu would never have been entertained but for his after rapacity and cruelty towards those who were at least his guests, if not his friends. Here his conduct was entirely without justification. But while we remember that "two blacks do not make one white," it is only right to mention that in the matter of plundering the mission property the guilt of Sekeletu was at least equalled by that of another, who tempted him to adopt the unworthy course which he pursued. And, strange to say, this enemy, at once to Sekeletu and to the mission party, belonged himself to the latter.

If the native teacher Tabe was a source of strength to a mission among a new tribe, he brought with him a wild and desperate young man called Mahuse, whose influence was calculated to counteract all the good that his master effected. This person's character was well known in the Kuruman district. Dr. Moffat recommended that he should be expelled from the mission party. But he had ingratiated himself with Tabe; and Mr. Helmore, animated by the charity which hopeth all things, and believing that close contact with such a company for months might beneficially affect the young man's character and future life, did not insist on his separation from the expedition.

Soon after their arrival at Linyanti, Mahuse found the atmosphere of Sekeletu's courtyard more congenial than the encampment of the missionaries. Of course he figured among the Makololo as a distinguished personage, and was consulted by Sekeletu on all matters affecting the south, or the manners and customs of the white men. Having roamed over a considerable extent of country, Mahuse was able to speak largely of his travels, and his fluency was not at all interrupted when his information came to an end. It is most provoking to observe the credence which such clever unprincipled fellows obtain all over the country. I have known several instances of imposition equally glaring with that of Mahuse, though not attended with such lamentable consequences. When Mr. Helmore died, Mahuse informed Sekeletu that if this event had taken place in the south, all the property of the deceased would have fallen to the chief



Yours very sincerely
Robert Moffat.

in whose country he died. He quoted supposed cases illustrative of his position, in which Moshesh and Sechele and Mahure, and other chieftains, had helped themselves. "Of course," said the tempter, "being ignorant, and afraid of these white people, you, Sekeletu, are likely to let Mr. Price return with all the property intact. The great chiefs whom I have named would not do so." Now Sekeletu must have known perfectly that all this was false; but being as weak and vacillating in his character as Sebetuane, his predecessor, had been energetic and determined, he yielded to the advice of Mahuse the tempter, who was backed by a party of hare-brained youths acting the part of councillors to this African Rehoboam.

And so while Mr. Price was slowly packing up the property of his deceased friends, and making ready to return to the south, his movements were closely watched by the agents of Sekeletu. A little effort soon prostrated a frame which, however wiry and powerful, was now much impaired by disease, so that it was not until the end of May that Mr. Price had finished his preparations. The presence of sickness and death in the camp had for some time made the Makololo strangers in it; but after Mr. Helmore was buried they crowded the place by day, stealing openly, and almost unchallenged, for Mr. Price was often unable to rise from the pallet where he lay. At night they prowled about the waggons, even lifting the sail-covering, and dragging away the wearing apparel of the sleeping missionary. There was no redress to be obtained from the chief or from the headmen. Sekeletu completely forgot the outward dignity of a chief in his own town, and openly derided the missionary when he made complaints.

When Mr. Price announced that he was now ready to depart, Sekeletu made his appearance at the head of a numerous company of attendants. Pulling aside Mr. Helmore's new waggon, in which Mr. Price had stowed many of his own things, as well as what had belonged to Mr. Helmore, Sekeletu declared it to be his property and all that it contained. Acting evidently under Mahuse's instructions, he next demanded two front and two hind oxen, in order to train a team for himself; and he postponed the

departure of Mr. Price until his men had assisted in the work of training these oxen.

When at length, on the 19th of June, Mr. Price took his departure from a place where he had endured so much, he was accompanied by Sekeletu, who rode in his newly-acquired waggon! He levied a fine on Mr. Price at every river, delaying the ferrying until his demands were met. "All my guns and ammunition," writes Mr. Price to the Directors, "both tents, and a great many other things, were taken while I was still in town." The meanness of Sekeletu, however, reached its height at the Chobe, which being the last river, was also the last occasion for levying a fine. "After a good deal of pleading," says Mr. Price, "I was allowed a few things for the journey, such as a couple of shirts, a vest or two, two or three pairs of trousers, an old coat that I had worn in England, an old pair of shoes which I had on, &c. Already they had taken all my bed-clothing, with the exception of what was just sufficient for one bed; for the other we had a "kaross." But before my oxen could cross the Chobe, I must needs deliver up our blanket. Every grain of corn which I had for food for the men they had taken; and for all these things I did not get even a goat for slaughter on the road. These were my prospects for a journey of upwards of 1,000 miles to Kuruman."

It is thus abundantly evident that it cannot be said on behalf of Sekeletu and the Makololo what I boldly advanced in my ignorance at Maila, "Sekeletu is the friend of missionaries; he would neither kill them nor rob them." So far as character is concerned, that of the Makololo chief and people would not sink much lower in the estimation of natives, even could it be clearly proved that they were guilty of poisoning. Hospitality is a sacred obligation among the tribes of Southern Africa. A chief may refuse admission to his country, but having invited the stranger to enter, his good name demands that no harm should befall him as long as he remains his guest. Now Sekeletu degraded himself in the eyes of all natives, if not in killing his guests with poison, by robbing them when sick and helpless, and completely in his power. I have never heard a native speak of this conduct but as an

enormous offence—almost the greatest that could be committed. Their argument, indeed, seems to have been: he who could rob the little children of a guest, and send them away hungry and almost naked from his town, had a heart black enough for anything. And seeing that their

WAGGON-TRAVELLING IN SOUTH AFRICA: "FULL SPEED."

parents died so suddenly, there is no doubt he murdered them. If he did not murder them, the natives go on to argue, why did he not himself assist Mr. Price to collect all the property, and send a party of his men to narrate to Mr. Helmore's friends the circumstances attending the sudden death of so many in his town? There is no doubt

that the majority of South African chiefs would have followed this course in similar circumstances; and there is little question that Sekeletu—impulsive and easily persuaded—would himself have done so had Mahuse been as energetic and eloquent in recommending it as he was in the advocacy of heartless spoliation.

This is fully borne out by what took place about six weeks after Mr. Price left the Makololo. Joseph Arend, a native hunter from Kuruman, then visited the Victoria Falls, and was the first stranger from the south who arrived in the country after the departure of Mr. Price. The Makololo were at first suspicious as to the object of his visit, and came to his camp in their war-dress. Finding, however, that Arend had not met Mr. Price, and knew nothing of the recent disasters at Linyanti, they proceeded to give their version of the story. Sekeletu sent two messengers to Arend to inform him that the missionary party had died of fever; and that he (Sekeletu) had urged Mr. Price to leave, "lest he also should die, and in order that he might inform his friends what had happened." Mr. Price, they added, had left a waggon behind, which was in Sekeletu's charge. This wretched weakling had now repented him of the evil counsel of Mahuse, or he dreaded its consequences. Some one with equal eloquence and more sense than this firebrand had come to the assistance of the unworthy successor of Sebetuane. This councillor had no doubt plainly pointed out that if they admitted that they took the waggon by force, every one would believe they had also poisoned the owners. Therefore it must be denied that it was taken by force, and be strongly affirmed by everybody that Mr. Price had left it in their charge.

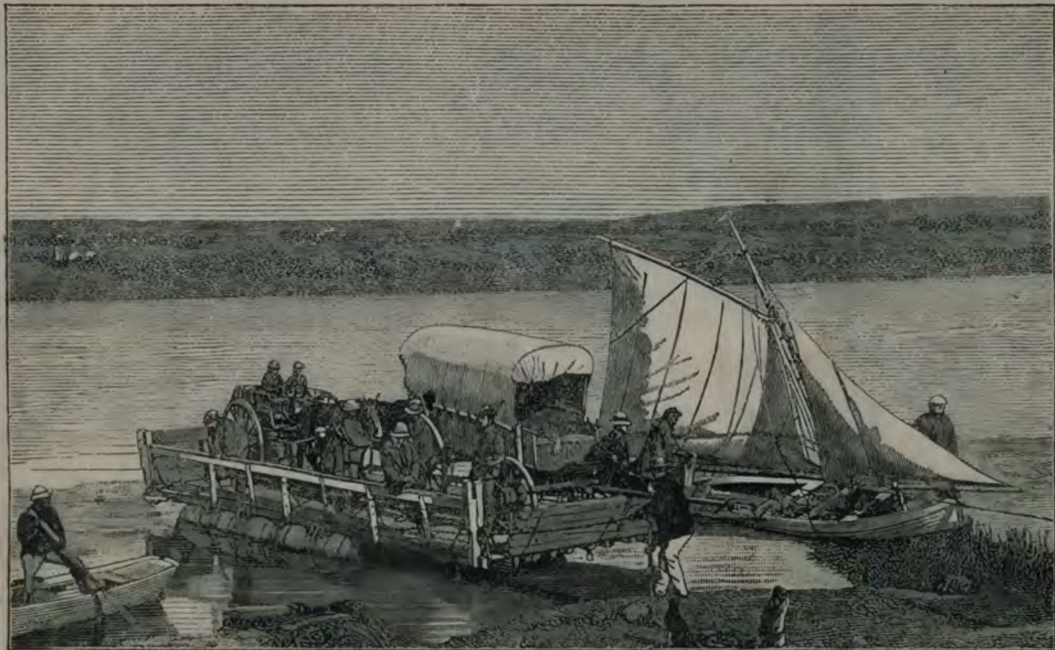
Soon after this Dr. Livingstone arrived at Linyanti; and in addition to this story the Makololo endeavoured to prejudice him against Mr. Price. They had good reason to fear Mr. Price's testimony; and their only chance was to endeavour to damage such an awkward witness. In answer to Dr. Livingstone's inquiries, Sekeletu said Mr. Price had given him Mr. Helmore's waggon. But the suspicions of the Doctor were roused when he saw Mr. Helmore's property

lying about, although he seemed at a loss upon whose shoulders to lay the blame.

Sekeletu, however, soon after made a confession to Sebehwe, another hunter, and son of the native teacher at the Bangwaketse, which may be received as very near the truth. He repudiated the charge of poisoning; and said that if he had intended to kill the white people, how was it that he allowed any to escape? The fact that people weak and helpless had been permitted by him to leave his country would show that he had not the guilt of killing those who died. But he confessed that he had taken the property of the deceased at the suggestion of two of the mission party—one belonging to Likatlong and the other to Kuruman. He said he was now ready to make restitution; and asked Sebehwe in the meantime to take out the waggon to Dr. Moffat to show that he repented of what he had done. He also expressed his willingness to pay whatever Dr. Moffat might ask for the goods which had been destroyed.

On the 26th June, Mr. Price started from the Chobe river, and left the country of the inhospitable Makololo behind him. Although all very much reduced by sickness, they were now proceeding into a healthier country; the bracing winter had also set in; so there was cause for them to hope and to take courage. The first account which I received of Mr. Price's party was from a Bushman who had seen them at this stage in their journey. Alas! that when I myself met with him two months later, he had to lament another bereavement, which was the bitter dregs of a cup of which my friend had so freely partaken, and a stroke which was all the more severe because entirely unexpected at the time. In describing the lamented death of Mrs. Price, whose lovely character had endeared her to all who knew her, and whose gifts and accomplishments would have enabled her to further the objects of the mission, while she cheered and adorned the home of the missionary—I shall quote the touching words of her husband:—

"On the plain of the Mababe, on the evening of the 4th July, Mr. Helmore's two children, my own dear wife,



A PONTOON FERRY IN SOUTH AFRICA.

and I, met together for our evening meal, when we entered into conversation about what we had seen and suffered; and feeling that we were beginning to breathe again the fresh air of the desert, we admonished one another to forget the past and think of our mercies; for we felt that we had still what might, through the mercy of God, bring us within reach of help. My dear wife had been for a long time utterly helpless, but we all thought she was getting better. She went to sleep that night, alas! to wake no more! In the morning early I found her breathing very hard. 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 mid-day her spirit took its flight to God who gave it. I buried her the same evening under a tree—the only tree on the whole of the immense plain of the Mababe. This was to me a heavy stroke, but 'God was my refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.' Such things are hard to bear; but God knoweth our frame, and as our day is, so is our strength. With a heavy heart I left that place on the following day, and crossed the Mababe."

It is peculiarly hard for some natures to die in a foreign land; they long for another loving look at the old familiar scene; to hear once more the old familiar voices. But it is surely a more dreary thing to leave behind at death all the home which the spirit knows. It is no doubt sad to think of a young lady, beloved by parents and brothers and sisters in England, being buried by her lonely husband beneath the solitary tree in an African wilderness. But after all the lonesome thought has reference only to the body. The Christian is not alone, even in the valley of the shadow of death. "Lo, I am with you alway; I will come again, and receive you unto myself. Where I am, there shall also my servant be." In the companionship of Jesus there was no loneliness for the gentle spirit that was disembodied on the plains of the Mababe. Many a lonelier soul takes it unbefriended flight from downiest pillow, and from sumptuous sick-chamber crowded with weeping mourners. We need not then weep for her, but for ourselves and our children.

On the southern side of the Mababe Mr. Price met with Bushmen, and the agreement with the Makololo guides who still accompanied the missionary was that their task should be at an end when they could leave him in the hands of the Bushmen. It would seem that the cruelty of the Makololo was not yet complete. Mr. Price afterwards learned that they gave instructions to the Bushmen to lead the waggons into the habitat of the tsetse. Whether the Makololo were guilty of this final act of malice or not, it is certain that the Bushmen led them right into the fly, and then ran away. Now they had nothing to gain from such treachery, but everything to lose. They lost their pay, and the pleasant life of travelling with a white man's waggon which a Bushman always enjoys. It is difficult to suppose that this act was not intentional; and it is equally difficult to acquit the Makololo of the chief share in its guilt, inasmuch as Bushmen would be afraid to refuse obedience to their command.

TSETSE FLY.

Once in the fly, and without guides, Mr. Price despaired of being able to save the forty-four oxen which now constituted his troop. He therefore made straight for the Tamalakan River, which he followed southward to the Zouga. Mr. Helmore's old waggon had broken down, and had been left behind on the north of the Mababe; and one of the front wheels of Mr. Price's own waggon broke in the neighbourhood of Lechulatebe's town. With fever still clinging to him, it was with great difficulty Mr. Price made new spokes of such wood as he could find; but although performed in such circumstances, his repairs afterwards sufficed to take the waggon to Kuruman. Lechulatebe had shown great kindness to Mr. Price and the

two orphan children of Mr. Helmore. When the waggon broke down, he sent assistance to remove it to the town; and during the month of their stay at the Lake, neither Mr. Price nor the children wanted anything which it was in the power of Lechulatebe to provide. Mr. Price had still a little tea and coffee and sugar left. The chief, who was very partial to these things, gave in exchange abundance of such food as his town supplied. Every day the tribute in meat (the breast of every animal killed) arrived from some outlying district. It might be the flesh of rhinoceros or buffalo, gnu or zebra, giraffe or eland; but whatever it was, Mr. Price was welcome to a share.

The missionary was now a fixture at the Lake; for although the waggon was capable of repair, nothing could save the tsetse-bitten oxen from death. With nothing to purchase a fresh team, or even food for himself and his men, it was welcome news to Mr. Price to hear from the boatmen of Lechulatebe that "a missionary on his way to the Makololo had touched the Zouga at More oa Maotu." Meeting with us on the Zóuga after such dark and sorrowful experiences was, in Mr. Price's own words, "like a resurrection from the dead."

Summing up his personal connection with these calamities, Mr. Price wrote to the Directors of the Society:—"If suffering in mission work is doing anything, then I have done something; if not, then I have done but little. My prayer now is, that God will direct me to some suitable sphere, where I may spend my life in the service of Christ among the heathen." This prayer has been graciously answered. In the active duties of a mission-station, Mr. Price has spent years of earnest and willing service to Christ. In this work he has companions and fellow-labourers; but in the higher service of suffering, in the dark experiences at the fever-bed and the grave's mouth at inhospitable Linyanti, he is alone among his brethren.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE BOTLETLE RIVER.

N Monday, the 10th September, we crossed over to the west bank of the Zouga at Letsebogo ya Khame, or Khame's Ford. The Makoba first directed us to a very deep part of the river, where they had collected several boats for the purpose of carrying over our waggons in pieces, and also our goods. Mr. Price recollected that on the Saturday he had passed a very shallow part of the river, where he thought waggons could cross without being unloaded. The Makoba at first denied that there was a ford, but on being assured that I should give them a much higher reward for the discovery of a ford than for the use of their boats, they guided us to the place. After carefully examining it we found that waggons could cross without difficulty. We were thus saved some three days' hard work in unloading the waggons and ferrying them across. The same night I was able to make arrangements for leaving three waggons and oxen here while we accompanied Mr. Price to the Lake, where our arrival was eagerly expected by the little children as well as by the Bechwana servants. In order to expedite our movements, I emptied out the goods from my own waggon, taking only an assortment of articles likely to be of use in buying oxen from Lechulatebe. With a light waggon and two spans of oxen,

we proceeded as fast as the dense thorn trees would allow us.

On our way we passed the remnant of the oxen of Messrs. Helmore and Price. They were grazing in charge of some men at a little village called Matupenyane, and miserable objects they were. Only twelve were now left out of forty-four, and of these only three reached Kuruman. It was Mr. Price's opinion that these three had not been bitten, as they never were ill like the rest. There stood the poor creatures, doomed to die; their hair on end, their eyes sunken, their bones almost piercing the skin, and most of them with a large swelling outside the throat. A native of this district, after speaking about the tsetse and its deadly effects, put to me the following question: "You white people are very wise; you say you have the word of God in your possession; and it is no doubt true, for you can make waggons, and guns, and can ride on horses. Explain therefore this difficulty which baffles all black people. The buffalo and the common ox are so much alike that even Bushmen sometimes mistake the track of the one when it crosses and mixes with that of the other. The tsetse kills the ox, but it cannot kill the buffalo. In the same way, the zebra and the horse, although resembling each other, do not meet with the same fate when bitten by tsetse; the horse dies speedily, the zebra is none the worse. Since you white people have come among us with your wisdom, we blacks say to one another, 'Now we shall be told the mystery of the tsetse-bite.'"

To such inquiries, in which there was always suppressed sarcasm, I had to return for answer that I was more ignorant about the tsetse than they themselves, as it was not known in the white man's country!

Boating on the Zouga is a very pleasant mode of locomotion when compared with the jolting ox-waggon. The river was deep, and as placid as a lake. One could hardly tell in what direction the water was flowing. The crocodile sank heavily into the water before our approaching boat. The Makoba seemed to know their way through the tall reeds as the Bushmen knew to thread the sandy

wastes. When passing one evening in a canoe the place where the Tamalakan flows into the Zouga, I could not help thinking how easily the evangelist could move from place to place in such a conveyance, and how far he could go in nearly all directions along the vast river system of the interior.

We passed several villages of the Makoba, the blackest people I had yet seen, with large eyes, abundance of woolly hair, and bodies strongly built and well-proportioned. The men had usually beard and whiskers, which, however, they kept closely cropped. Their language belongs to the Bantu family. The Makoba are vassals, like the Bakalahari and Bushmen. Like them also they submit to whomsoever is actual ruler of the country at the time. The Makololo on the Zambese, and the Bechwanas on the Ngami and Zouga, exercised a severe sway over these subject people. While Mr. Price was at Linyanti, he was aware of more than one instance in which a vassal, having given offence, was summarily speared by his master, no one taking any notice of the "dog" whose life had been thus thoughtlessly ended. While Lechulatebe's people were perhaps a little more merciful as to taking away life, his laws were very stringent. The banks of the river are covered with game-pits, which every night secure numbers of game. But only the inside of the animals may be eaten by the vassals; the breast is for the chief; the rest of the meat for the "headman" who is master of the serfs. Every man of consideration at the Lake has Makoba vassals, and some have both Bushmen and Makoba. The former hunt in the distant wilderness; the latter busy themselves with game-pits by the river bank; the produce of the labour of both being for their liege lords. The master amuses himself as he pleases; sometimes hunting with his Bushmen, on other occasions living with the Makoba in their village, which is his, and embarking in their canoe, which is also his.

The following anecdote will show whether or not the Makoba are quite content with this state of vassalage. I had been in the water, and while sitting on the river bank afterwards, one of the Makoba, my only companion, first carefully examined my foot, remarking its whiteness as com-

pared with my face. He then took up my socks, put his hands into them, and examined the knitting. The boots were next inspected. Where was the sewing? He then placed my shoe alongside his very large foot and clumsy sandal, and then, first looking round on all sides to see if we were alone, to my amazement broke out, "Khosi (chief)! you white people ought to come in here and fight with these Bechwanas, and overcome them; they give us no rest, we are never done serving them." Glancing again at the wonderful socks and boots, he went on, "Now, you white people have wisdom; you have something to give those who are your vassals. Your servants are dressed with 'likhai' (cloths), and you have no end of beautiful things in your waggons. Come in and conquer the Bechwanas, and the Makoba will be glad to be *your* servants!" Even this fisherman on the Zouga wished to dispose of his fish in the best market! *He* would not fight with the present owners of the country, but he considered it would be greatly to his advantage if the white people fought with them and took the country and all its belongings into their own possession.

On another occasion I observed a number of Makoba running alongside the waggon, and apparently explaining the action of the wheels to one of their number. They informed me that the man in question had come from a distance, and that this was the first time he had seen a waggon. As I noticed the interest with which he kept up with the waggon for a considerable distance, I was reminded of the Scotchman who, when he first saw a four-wheeled carriage, after protracted observation, applauded the front wheel as the winner of a race, exclaiming, "Weel dune, little wheelie; aye first yet!"

Without any hesitation, the Makoba, in answer to my inquiry, expressed their belief in a state of being after death. They seemed to have the notion that all disembodied spirits, at least of the Makoba, proceeded westward. But I could not find that they had any clear ideas about future rewards or punishments in connection with the present life. It is not improbable that their idea about going "towards the setting sun" after death had reference to joining their

ancestors. The same people told me that they had formerly lived to the north-west.

On the 18th of September we reached the town of Lechulatebe, chief of the Batowana, a division of the Bamangwato tribe. It was then on the south bank of the Zouga, and not far from Lake Ngami, or Nghabe, as the Batowana call it. We drew up beside Mr. Price's waggon, and found little Lizzie Helmore in good health, but Willie was very sickly. It was touching to see the joy with which the two orphan children welcomed Mr. Price's return, and their gladness when brought to Mrs. Mackenzie. For the next five months we lived together as one family, and it was the daily effort of my wife and myself to cheer and sustain the drooping spirits of our bereaved companions. Lechulatebe received and deserved our special thanks for his kindness, to the children as well as to Mr. Price. Having now the means of doing so, Mr. Price made the chief a suitable present, expressing at the same time the sentiment that he was not paying for kindness, or even for hospitality—he would gladly accept of these as gifts. But now, God having sent him assistance, he did not wish that his friend should be left without some remembrancer of the missionary whom he had so kindly succoured.

We now endeavoured to purchase fresh oxen for Mr. Price's waggon. We were willing to sell anything we possessed, but of course offered those things which we could best spare. Knowing the taste of his host, Mr. Price had directed me to bring tea, coffee, sugar, and flour belonging to himself and Mr. Helmore as articles of barter; and when we arrived the chief declared he would purchase nothing but "white man's food." He had been able to keep up a supply of these articles from English traders, who then occasionally visited him from Walvisch Bay on the west coast. Had we wished to buy ivory, instead of cattle, we could have transacted a large business; but we found the Batowana unwilling to sell their oxen. In the course of the week we succeeded in purchasing ten young oxen, which, with the spare ones in my troop, we hoped would be sufficient.

On Sunday, the 23rd, we had a public service in Lechu-

latebe's "kotla," which was well attended; and our audience included Lechulatebe and all his headmen. I delivered an address during the public service; and afterwards we had a very interesting discussion with the chief and his headmen.

"What was it which pleased you missionaries in Sekeletu and the Makololo," asked Lechulatebe, "that you should all pass me by, leaving my town in ruins, while you went to build up that of Sekeletu? I desire instruction for myself and my people; I should persecute no one for believing; at any rate, I have shown that I would not eat the missionaries up in my own town, as Sekeletu has done."

The teeming population on the rivers, their accessibility by boats, the attentiveness of the people, and the openly expressed welcome of the chief, made a great impression on my mind. Some time after, in writing to the Directors of the Society, I drew their attention to this wide field for evangelistic effort. It was not, however, till 1875 that Mr. Hepburn, accompanied by two native ministers from the Moffat Institution, Khukhwe and Dipokwe, commenced evangelistic work at the Lake. This has been carried on since by Mr. Hepburn, who has made several journeys from Shoshong to Lake Nghabe. The results of their devoted and persevering efforts have been most gratifying. The whole tribe has given more or less attention to the preaching; and a church of some one hundred members has already been gathered by Mr. Hepburn and his assistants. The duty of supporting their teachers has been impressed on this church, and already they pledge the sum of £60 per annum as payment of the salary of one native minister. In their own journeyings along the Teoghe and Tamalakan rivers, the members of the Lake Church are diligent in proclaiming their new faith. The work, however, is still in its beginnings, and to the north and north-west of Lake Nghabe there is undoubtedly a dense population to whom the Gospel is as yet unknown.

Mr. Price and I returned to the waggons, canvassing the best way of introducing Christianity into this region, when we found that during our absence my little child had been prostrated by fever. Having all necessary

medicines with me, and prescriptions for the cure of fever by Dr. Livingstone and Dr. Palgrave, who had passed through the country the year before, I proceeded without delay to administer the proper remedies. We were deeply thankful to see the desired results follow. But this event hastened our departure from the Lake. We had projected a visit round part of its shore; but instead of that I saw it only from a distance.

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN JOURNEY.

WE left the Lake on Wednesday, the 26th of September, and after a week's journey reached Khame's Ford, where I had left the three waggons under the charge of Mebalwe. Two oxen had fallen into game-pits in the neighbourhood, owing to the carelessness of the herdsman, and both had died before they were got out. A similar accident afterwards happened, but by promptness the animal was dug out before it was injured. My men informed me with some pride that they had shot six buffaloes during my absence. Before leaving I had supplied them with some native corn, and also coffee; but for meat I left them guns and powder and lead. I was pleased to find that they had turned these things to good account.

I had now fulfilled one object of my journey, although under circumstances widely different from what I had anticipated. I had assisted the only surviving member of the Makololo mission with those supplies which I had brought from the south. But what of the mission itself? And what of my own future course? I found that Mr. Price and Dr. Livingstone held opposite views as to the willingness of the Makololo to remove to the north of the Zambese. We had left England on the recommendation of Dr. Livingstone, and on the supposition that they would leave Linyanti; but Mr. Price had no hesitation in affirming, not only that they were unwilling to remove, but that,

so far as he could gather, they never intended to do so. While I did not believe that Sekeletu had poisoned those who died, no one could gainsay the fact that he had treated Mr. Price in the most cruel and inhospitable manner, robbing him and the little children of almost everything they possessed. Was I then to go forward to Linyanti after what had taken place? It seemed absurd to do so, until at least the Directors of the Society, under whose auspices we had come to the country, had had an opportunity of considering the whole matter. But it was not without reluctance that I came to this decision. One does not feel satisfied in turning back without seeing and judging for one's self. I had a long conversation with old Mebalwe before making up my mind. He assured me there was not a man in the party who would accompany me to the Makololo after the accounts they had received from Mr. Helmore and Mr. Price's men. It was thus plainly enough my first duty to return with Mr. Price to Kuruman, and there wait fresh instructions from the Directors in London.

Leaving Khame's Ford about the middle of October, we proceeded slowly southward along the west bank of the Zouga.

One of my men caught fever on the Zouga. This was the only case among the men. The disease hung about our little child during the whole time we were on the Zouga. But as soon as we emerged from the dense foliage of the Lake river, and proceeded into the open plains of the Bushman country, a complete change took place in his health and spirits. The face which had become pale when not flushed with fever, regained its own healthy appearance; the eye, which had been dull and listless, became clear and bright; and the child, who along the river sat wearily beside its mother, devóid of energy and spirit, was now once more full of vivacity. What the utmost solicitude and attention could not accomplish in the humid atmosphere of the Zouga, was effected without the aid of medicine by the pure air of the desert.

A marked improvement also took place in the health of Mr. Price and the children of Mr. Helmore as we journeyed southward.

ON THE ROAD.

I found it difficult to manage the men who had formed part of the expedition to Linyanti, a task which I readily undertook at Mr. Price's request. They were thoroughly soured and disappointed. They had expected pleasant times among the Makololo, and perhaps dreamt of enriching themselves, instead of which they had barely escaped with their lives. One man who was suspected of joining in Mahuse's evil counsels at Linyanti received the appointment of goatherd under my dispensation. He was accustomed to walk about with the air of a man who had a grievance, and, as a matter of course, left his goats and sheep to look after themselves. He would answer a command from ten to twenty minutes after it was given, and seldom obeyed without growling or swearing at all and sundry.

Then my own men were disappointed also, and I found it a very different thing to journey south with men in this temper from what it was to travel north, every mind animated with hope. One night, when half-way between Lotlakane and Nkowane, on our way

south, the listless men allowed the oxen to stray in the night, and they were found next day at noon far on their way back to the water. It was late in the day before they were brought again to the waggons, and the poor creatures were exhausted with their bootless journey. We had, fortunately, plenty of water for our own use. While waiting for the cattle to come back, and feeling all the chagrin and disappointment which my circumstances were calculated to produce, I overheard a conversation between Mr. Helmore's two children which affected me deeply.

Little Willie Helmore remarked to his sister that he was very thirsty. Was the water all done? His sister, who was older than he, answered that "he must be a good boy, and not ask for water. The oxen had gone astray. Did he not remember how they had been thirsty long ago, when mamma was still living? They must not ask for water." The poor little fellow had nothing more to say, but lay still, not very thirsty, but very unhappy. In a little I called him to me, and, without appearing to have heard their conversation, poured out a large cup of water, and gave him to drink. I assured him that there was abundance of water, and that as soon as he felt even a little thirsty he must come again, and I should give him a large drink. I observed that he drank only a little, and the idea of danger or uncertainty once driven from his youthful mind, he played in the shade of the waggons as usual, and I heard no more of thirst. Of course this was easy where there were not many children. But I cannot fancy a more trying position than to have charge of a number of little children in the desert where the supply of water is short.

We reached Shoshong on the 1st of December, where we remained for two months, experiencing much kindness and hospitality from Mr. Schulenborg of the Hermannsburg Society, who was at this time labouring as a missionary among the Bamangwato. A week after leaving Shoshong we were agreeably surprised to meet our veteran friend Dr. Moffat, who was, as he explained to us, on his way to search for us, and to bring us relief. The news of the calamity at Linyanti had reached Kuruman through Joseph Arend, the native hunter, who had visited the Victoria Falls. Dr.

Moffat informed us that, having communicated the sad intelligence to friends in Cape Town, a public subscription had been there set on foot to send relief to the surviving members of a mission, all the members of which had but a short time before left that town in good health and spirits. Dr. Moffat, whose Kuruman home since 1855 was, in his own words, "more like the lodge of a wayfaring man than a permanent abode," had cheerfully volunteered to act as agent for those kind Christian friends at the Cape; and thus the pleasure of meeting him was enhanced by the consideration that he was on this occasion, in a peculiar sense, the "messenger of the churches."

We were much gratified to learn that the expedition which now met us represented the Christian sympathy of all the churches at the Cape—thus teaching us that whatever apparent schisms or divisions there might be in the Church of Christ, "all had been baptised by one Spirit into one body," and thus, "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." I may add, that with that clannish feeling which is characteristic of my country, I was particularly pleased to find among the contributors the name of Bishop Mackenzie, of the English Universities Zambese Mission. Alas, that in the death of this admirable Christian bishop the churches should have been called upon so soon after to mourn a calamity similar to that at Linyanti! Deeply grateful for the assistance which Dr. Moffat now proffered, I was still more thankful to be able to say that I stood in need of nothing, and to allay the solicitude of our dear friend by assuring him that no one travelling in our company had ever endured a day's hunger or thirst.

We again reached Kuruman on the 14th of February, exactly one year after the entry of Messrs. Helmore and Price into Linyanti. My own journey had extended over nine months, and I was glad when I had paid off the men, and returned the hired waggons, with whose "weak places" I was now painfully familiar, and once more entered a Christian home under the hospitable roof of Mr. Ashton.

Some weeks after our return to Kuruman, my wife, who had enjoyed very good health while in the interior, was prostrated by a severe attack of fever. It was of a type

unusual in the neighbourhood of Kuruman, and similar to what I was afterwards familiar with in the district of Shoshong. After reducing her very much, it assumed an intermittent form; and nothing that Dr. Moffat or Mr. Ashton could assist me in prescribing was effective in dislodging it from the system. Quinine, which is of great service in warding off recurrent attacks, became so distasteful that it instantly acted as an emetic. Given in the form of pills, covered or disguised in any way, it produced the same result. I had not then met with a most useful preparation of quinine for South African fever, and one which the system does not reject—the citrate of iron and quinine. It will be remembered that Mrs. Livingstone, before her death from fever at Shupanga, on the Zambese, was affected by quinine in the same way as Mrs. Mackenzie.

Fairly baffled in our attempts to cure my wife, and remembering the beneficial effect of change of air on our little child, we resolved to try its effect upon his mother. In order, at the same time, to secure the advice of medical men, we resolved to journey towards the Cape Colony. But before we had been gone a week a marked change for the better was observable in Mrs. Mackenzie's health, and my joy in her convalescence was shared by Miss Moffat (now Mrs. Price), who had very kindly accompanied us, and by Mr. Price, who was then on his way to the Colony with Mr. Helmore's little children.

CHAPTER XII.

APPOINTED TO SHOSHONG.

IN giving the Directors of the Society an account of my journey into the interior, I expressed the opinion that if they intended to persevere in introducing Christianity into the Zambese country, operations could be best carried on from the east coast; and offered to proceed thither with that object in view. If, however, the Society intended to work the Zambese district from the south, and in connection with missions already established, it was evident that there must be a chain of intervening stations. To go from Kuruman to the Zambese country at one bound was to separate the advance guard too far from the main body, and was sure to lead to disaster. This view of the case had also been pressed upon their attention by the other missionaries when on their way into the interior. At this time liberty had been given to resume the work of evangelising Madagascar: and in case there should be any lack of men to take advantage of the opening, I mentioned to the Directors my willingness to undertake work in that island—and, in short, placed myself entirely in their hands.

While waiting their decision, I itinerated in the towns and villages of South Bechwanaland, and also made two additions to the Sechwana literature, in the compilation of a little book on geography, and in the translation of the

well-known work by the Rev. Newman Hall, "Come to Jesus." I suggested to native teachers that along with their own discourses (which were not always to the point) they should occasionally read to their people one of the short addresses given in that volume.

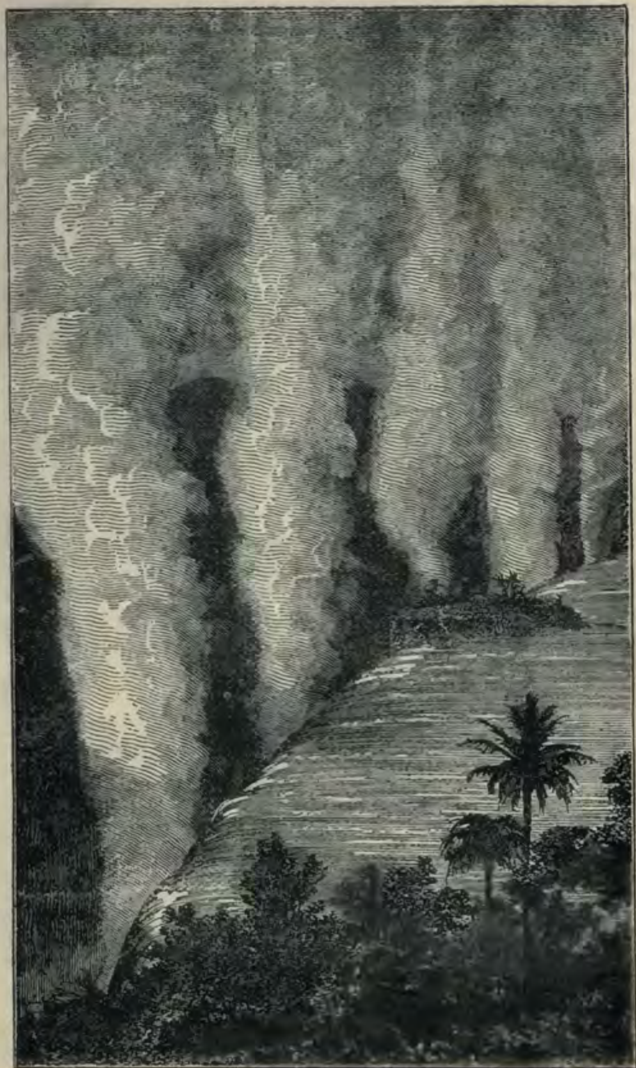
The Directors of the Society would seem to have been somewhat at a loss to know how to dispose of Mr. Price and myself. I was kept more than a year in suspense. At length, in May, 1862, I received an appointment to Shoshong, the town of the Bamangwato. Dr. Livingstone was the first missionary who preached to the Bamangwato. His first visit to them was in 1842, that of Dr. Moffat in 1855. The importance of the place as a station was pointed out by the latter missionary; and a native teacher from Kuruman conducted a school for some time at Shoshong. But in arranging for their interior missions in 1858 this important station was unfortunately passed over by the Directors of the Society. Its population of thirty thousand souls ought alone to have led to a different decision; and its importance, with reference to the country beyond, was hardly less striking. Had a mission been first planted here, at a point four hundred miles farther north than Kuruman, it would have been easy afterwards to communicate with the Makololo concerning the residence of missionaries among them.

In 1859 a missionary of the Hermannsburg Society commenced operations among the Bamangwato. Owing, however, to some misunderstanding between the managers of the Society and its agents in Bechwanaland, the latter were for a time denied pecuniary assistance from Europe, and were compelled to resort to trading with the natives for support. It was reported that in these circumstances the station of Shoshong was abandoned by the missionary, who had returned to Natal; and the Directors of the London Society requested me to occupy the town as one of their stations. The above report, however, was not strictly correct; so I felt it to be my duty to inform the Directors that I did not regard a Bechwana town to be vacant while another European missionary resided in it; although, in this case, the desultory and often interrupted efforts of one

man, unconnected with any Society, were not to be taken into account by a Society carrying on an extensive work in the country. At Shoshong I should at least be able to communicate with the interior tribes, and especially with the Makololo.

Travelling with two waggons, I left Kuruman immediately after receiving the letter of instructions from the Directors. Besides some spare oxen, I had bought a few cows for the general benefit of my establishment in the interior, and with the view of replacing old and enfeebled oxen in my team. The Missionary Society supplies its South African agent with the first team of oxen which he needs on entering the country, but he is afterwards supposed to be able to supply oxen for himself. I had also purchased about twenty sheep, which the men were driving in front of the waggons with the spare oxen and cows. I now performed a journey of some four hundred miles at the rate of twenty-four miles a day. This is considered very good travelling in that country.

I found that the district between Sechele's Town and Shoshong was very dry, there being only two available waters on the road which I took, in a distance of about 140 miles. It was therefore necessary to travel a good deal by night. In such circumstances it was my custom to unyoke about an hour before sunset, that all might prepare for the work of the night. After having supper, my wife made all necessary arrangements for retiring to rest in the waggon with the little ones. The sail-covering having been tightly fastened down at both ends, the precious freight composed themselves to rest, rocked to sleep by the jolting of the rude waggon, and awoke only if it halted for any length of time on the way. My place was on the front of the waggon, beside the driver. It was this latter arrangement that gave confidence to my inside passengers: they fully believed that I would lead them into no danger. The men, who had just had a good supper, were in capital spirits, and the oxen, which had improved the opportunity to the best of their ability by their attentions to the grass of the prairie, stepped out with the waggons, during the cool hours of the delicious moon-



VICTORIA FALLS OF THE ZAMBESE.

light, at a much brisker pace than during the day. Havin
learned, soon after entering the country, to use the lor
whip of the waggon-driver, I now and then relieved one
my men, who meanwhile lit his pipe, and told me som
story of the olden time.

After toiling for hours one night in the sand, we were a
heartily glad when we ascended the bank of the old rive
course of Bonnononyane, and found ourselves rumblin
along at a fine pace over the hard road approaching Boatla
nama. We were going so fast that the drivers of the spar
oxen in front could hardly keep their charge out of th
way of the teams. As this was our second night withou
rest, the poor fellows who were driving the spare oxen wer
very tired, and I found, on going forward to assist them
that one man especially, who had had a severe illness a
Kuruman, was actually asleep while walking. He was noc
ding his head, and walking as if he had St. Vitus's dance
when he occasionally ejaculated to the oxen, his voice die
away before he could finish the word. The cattle which h
professed to be driving were—some before him, others o
each side, and a few had got behind him, and were drive
by the leader of the first waggon! I suggested that h
should take a good pinch of snuff, but although not at a
loath to do so, he said it had lost its power: the "sleep ha
conquered the tobacco." But something soon occurre
which roused him most effectually, as well as every othe
member of the party, except the happy sleepers inside th
waggon.

I had been walking some time in front of the waggons
whistling to the cattle which we were driving, and keepin
up the spirits of the men, when, not more than a hundre
yards in front of us on the road, the unwelcome roar of
lion suddenly brought every ox to a stand-still. The
raised their ears, and stretched forward their heads, sniffin
for the animal whose voice had alarmed them. What wa
to be done? Even if I halted and tied up the oxen which
were in the yoke, the loose cattle would certainly b
scattered by the lion. The place was just suited for hi
skulking movements, being dotted over with thorn bushes
In order to inspire my companions with confidence, I ran

to the waggon, and, seizing my gun, returned to drive the loose cattle on. I asked the men if their assegais were ready, and they said they were; but I did not anticipate much help in that direction. I hoped that, as it was a bright moonlight night, our right of way would be conceded by the loud-voiced footpad in front. The oxen were very unwilling to go on, especially some old ones which had been in the interior before. The younger and inexperienced animals led the way. I now looked out for a spring to be made upon them as they passed. The drivers behind stood on the waggon-chests, and made the welkin ring with their large whips. At length, urging on the most timid of the oxen, we passed the place from which the roar had issued. After this the oxen went on more willingly, and the waggon teams also passed unscathed.

The sequel of this story is not, however, quite so pleasant. Our best plan would have been to travel steadily on till daylight, for although the lion might follow on our track, it was not likely to attack us when the waggons were in motion, and amid the noise of whip-cracking and shouting to the oxen; while after daylight we should be still more secure. I was over-persuaded, however, by the drivers, who were weary and shivering with cold, to unyoke some time before day-dawn, and, fairly exhausted, fell asleep on the fore-chest of my waggon. The lion, which had followed us, approached the troop of oxen after they were unyoked, causing them to rush away in terror. It then seized upon one of them, which it proceeded to devour. The frightened animals, forgetting their weariness and thirst, fled for many miles from the waggons before they stopped. When daylight came I awoke, and finding out what had happened, at once despatched all the men to collect the oxen, reserving only two young boys to remain at the waggons. Taking one of these with me, I proceeded on the track of the lion, till it brought us to the place where he was having his breakfast. As we came up the lion left the carcase of the ox, showing his whereabouts by the movement of the long grass as he retreated. By-and-by he muttered a low growl as he went along, probably feeling that his morning meal had not been copious enough. See-

ing that the carcase of the ox was almost entire, I resolve
on behalf of my men, to have the Bushman's portion—th
"leavings" of the lion; so mounting guard, I sent the bo
back to the waggon for his mate, and for knives to skin m
unfortunate ox. This task they soon accomplished, an
conveyed the meat to the waggon, where it was duly cut u
and dried for the men's use.

A KRAAL, OR NATIVE VILLAGE.

Without oxen we could not, of course, move from th
spot where the waggons stood, and so spent a somewha
lonely and anxious day. Next night, however, we had
lively enough time of it, for the lion had brought back hi
wife and family to share the beef which he had so suddenl
deserted in the morning. It was the loudest serenade t
which one could listen; but as our sheep were within
good thorn fence, and our fires burned brightly, there wa

little cause for alarm. We were glad, however, when, next morning, the men appeared with our missing oxen, and we were able to pursue our journey. They were now ready to admit that the loss of the ox was owing to their haste in unyoking before daylight. "Cold is stronger than a lion," said these wiseacres; "we held out and passed the lion, but we were overcome by the cold."

On arriving at Shoshong in June, I found that Mr. Price, who had been appointed to reinforce the Matebele mission, had remained here, having taken the precaution of sending forward letters to the Matebele missionaries from himself and from Dr. Moffat, in order that his approach to the country might be announced to Moselekatse, and the feelings of the chief ascertained before he proceeded further. Moselekatse had no hesitation in returning an answer. Neither he nor his people desired more missionaries. Mr. John Moffat was the bearer of this message. Mr. Price was busily engaged when I arrived teaching the Bamangwato, in the temporary absence of the German missionary. I found that Mr. John Moffat entertained a strong desire to assist in the establishment of a mission to the north of the Zambese, having corresponded on the subject with his brother-in-law, Dr. Livingstone, who had given him many valuable hints as to the country and the best manner of procedure. This desire was strengthened when he found that I seriously contemplated a journey to that country next travelling season. Mr. Price also joined in this fresh attempt to open up the region of the Zambese to the Gospel. In August Mr. Price and I engaged an artisan who had been connected with the Hermannsburg mission, to cross the Zambese with us, and assist in the introductory work of the new station. I also purchased two horses for the projected journey, and sent out my waggon for the necessary supplies to Kuruman, whither Mr. Price also went for the same purpose about the end of the year.

This whole project, however, was destined to fall to the ground, from a combination of causes entirely beyond our control. Indeed, the whole idea upon which the two missions had been founded in England was itself entirely dissolved by the attack of the Matebele upon the Bamang-

wato. It was thought that missionaries would be able so to sway the councils of the Matebele, as that their old enemies, the Makololo, might with safety live in the open country of Tabacheu, provided they also had missionaries with them. But, as will be seen in the next chapter, Moselekatse attacked the Bamangwato without any provocation; although he had been told that missionaries were residing with Sekhome, and, indeed, that one of them (Mr. Price) had married the daughter of his friend, Dr. Moffat. It was therefore certain that the same chief would not be deterred from attacking the Makololo if they removed within his reach, even although missionaries were residing with them.

In June, 1863, I had an opportunity of communicating with Sekeletu, by a party of English gentlemen, who were visiting the Victoria Falls. I announced to him that we should not be able to cross the Zambese, as we had intended, and that he must also take notice that the presence of missionaries in his town had not prevented Sekhome from being attacked by Moselekatse. I still held out to him the hope that in the course of time missionaries might be able to reside with his tribe, but that we could not be a shield to him from his enemies. This was the last communication which we had with Sekeletu. He died soon after, a victim to leprosy, with which he had been afflicted for some time.

And now began the last brief chapter in the history of the Makololo tribe. Dr. Livingstone narrates how Sekeletu himself had to combat opposition after the death of Sebetuane, and how one of his opponents was put to death while the young chief was travelling with the Doctor. On Sekeletu's death, there was again bloodshed; and as the reign of Impololo, his successor, was of short duration, the intrigues and assassinations were hardly at an end when they were resumed in the interest of another claimant for the chieftainship. During these disturbances, the people of a small town of Makololo escaped, and were hospitably received by Lechulatebe at Lake Ngami. Others sought among their enemies, the Matebele, an asylum, which was granted. The Barotse, the Batoka, the Bashubea, and

INTERVIEW BETWEEN DR. LIVINGSTONE AND SEBETUANE.

other tribes which had been conquered by Sebetuane, were not uninterested spectators of the feuds which were thus decimating their proud masters. The fights as to the chieftainship took place when the Makololo were assembled at the capital, and it was observed by the keen-eyed vassals, that after the tumult was over for the time, and the lords were dispersed among their villages, their numbers kept steadily decreasing.

At length the Makololo were so few that even the timid and unwarlike tribes which had borne their yoke so long resolved by one united effort to regain their freedom by the destruction of their oppressors. A plot was accordingly concocted, which seems to have been closely concealed and well carried out by those who had the execution of it. The subject tribes rose in one night on their masters, and put them to death. Some Makololo, however, whose character had endeared them to their slaves, or whose vassals were perfidious to their own countrymen, were able to collect their families and their property and to escape across the Mababe into the Bushman country, which we have already described. A few also again escaped to Moselekatse. But the Makololo as a tribe were destroyed in this insurrection of their vassals. The Makololo women and little children were spared; and Lotanku, the Barotse chief, gained considerable prestige, even among his own people, by taking to wife Mamochisane, the daughter of Sebetuane. The Barotse now regarded themselves as revenged for the years of oppression which they had endured; and from a native point of view, in the possession of the wives, cattle, and "other possessions" of their former lords, their triumph was complete.

An evil destiny hung over the party of fugitives who had escaped across the Mababe on their way to Shoshong. They were intercepted by order of Lechulatebe, by one of their own fellow-countrymen who had long resided with that chief at Lake Ngami, and were induced to turn aside and seek an asylum at the Lake rather than at Shoshong. They were next artfully separated—the women and children, along with the flocks and herds, being on one side of the Zouga River—the men proceeding to the other side, osten-

sibly to meet Lechulatebe. After they had gone some distance they were pointed to a certain thicket in which Lechulatebe waited to receive them; but they were told that they must first lay down their arms as a matter of etiquette. This the betrayed Makololo did with reluctance, and proceeded into the thicket, where they were surrounded and murdered by the ambuscade of Lechulatebe.

Thus perished the Makololo from among the number of South African tribes. And yet this is the mighty people who more than forty years before spread dismay in the neighbourhood of Kuruman—who in their northward journey conquered the Bangwakatse, the Bakwena, and other tribes in that region—who drove the Bamangwato before them like antelopes before the lion—whose track can be marked by the usual signs of savage conquest: the wasted towns, the devastated country, the silent grief of the widowed and orphaned captives. By the measure which they had meted out to others was it now measured to them again. They had taken the sword and lived by it; by the sword they now perished.

CHAPTER XIII.

AT WORK AMONG THE BAMANGWATO.

ALTHOUGH I did not regard Shoshong as my permanent station in 1862, I proceeded, soon after my arrival, to build a temporary hut. I availed myself of the custom of the natives, and asked the chief to point out where I might build, which he was very willing to do. I bought nothing in connection with the building except the labour of the people who assisted me. The structure itself, whose outward appearance was more picturesque than symmetrical, was made of poles, plastered on both sides, and thatched with reeds. The house was divided into three rooms, to which a fourth was afterwards added. The kitchen was outside. Our "windows" were covered with white calico; they were therefore not very bright "eyes" to the house, but allowed of the free passage of "wind," so that our lowly abode was deliciously cool. When the hut was built we expected to occupy it only for a few months: it was, however, our only dwelling for three years.

Soon after my arrival, the Hanoverian missionary returned from the Transvaal country. I explained to him that I had been sent to Shoshong by the London Missionary Society, but that I hoped to be able to pierce farther into the interior next season. Mr. Price and I explained also that as we were to reside for some months in the midst of

a large heathen population, we should of course engage in instructing the people. We expressed our willingness to co-operate with our Lutheran friend if he desired it, during the time we were together, and suggested that our teaching should not extend to the points upon which we differed. The other alternative was that we should ourselves conduct public worship and day-school in another part of the town. Mr. Schulenborg chose that we should co-operate with him, sharing the public services of the Sunday, and teaching certain classes in the school. Perhaps we had the best part of this bargain, for the points upon which we were to be silent did not bulk so largely in our creed as in that of our friend. It was no effort to us to keep sacraments and ceremonies in the background; but it was a different matter with our colleague. The arrangement, however, was carried on very harmoniously; and we all found scope and verge enough for our teaching in the cardinal truths of our religion upon which we were truly agreed, and which it was of the first importance that the heathen should know. The London Society never censured us for taking this step; but I afterwards learned with regret that our friend's conduct had been disapproved of by his superiors. I even heard it hinted by others of his Society that our colleague was half suspected of having been inoculated during our co-operation with some of our dangerous "English views," and I could see that such a catastrophe as the slightest falling away from inherited Lutheranism would be deeply deplored.

In spite of all the charms and spells of the priests and doctors of Shoshong, small-pox made its appearance in the town at this time, the infection having been brought by some travellers from a village in the south, in which it was then raging. It thus took four years to travel a thousand miles, turning aside to visit every glen and lingering at every farm-steading.

On this occasion small-pox was accompanied by measles—where one went the other was sure to follow. The two diseases were known in Bechwanaland by the same names, "Sekoripane" and "Sekhonkhwane," the distinction being conveyed by the adjective "great" applied to small-pox, and "little" applied to measles. The names in Sechwana, like

the word "measles," have reference to the "dotted" appearance of the skin of those suffering from these diseases.

I found that the Bamangwato were in the habit of inoculating for small-pox—sometimes in the forehead, but more frequently on the front of the leg, a little above the knee. It was no doubt unwise to inoculate in the forehead; but among those whose knees and arms were equally bare, the other Bamangwato custom was natural enough. As in other communities, however, a large number of people refused to bestir themselves in the matter. "Sekoripane," they said, would kill those it intended to kill; and so they just let it alone. On several occasions I had received vaccine virus from the Colony, but had not succeeded with it. In order therefore to stay the ravages of the dreadful disease, we strongly recommended inoculation to Sekhome and his people, and offered to inoculate as many as came. We selected children with a mild form of the disease, some of whom indeed we found playing in the streets, and propagated that type by inoculation. We remembered that our own forefathers had done this for many a year before Dr. Jenner satisfactorily proved the value of vaccination. Sekhome and most of the grown-up people had had the small-pox on the occasion of its previous visit to the country. "It killed me before," was the usual remark of such persons, pointing at the same time to the marks in their faces.

I inoculated several of Sekhome's sons, and also a good many people. Only one person, of those to whom I thus gave the disease, was compelled to take to bed, and he only for two days. But in such a large town the number of deaths was very great. The careless and heedless who had not been inoculated, the poor people and the vassals, died every day. At length the people seemed to weary of burying the dead; especially in the case of friendless dependants. A long thong was tied to the body of such, which was dragged by this means behind some rock or bush, or into the dry bed of a ravine, and there left. The hyenas and tigers battened by night, the dogs and vultures and crows held carnival by day, on these exposed and putrefying corpses. Several times I stumbled over these hideous objects, and scattered the dogs from their revolting feast. I

HUTS AT SHOSHONG.

remonstrated with the chief, but little attention was paid. "The hearts of the people are dead within them," was the answer, and it really seemed to be so with many. After the disease had passed away, I met with several people in Shoshong and elsewhere who had become blind by the eruption appearing in the eye.

The wolf or spotted hyena (*Phiri*) of Bechwanaland is a large and powerful animal. Its fore-quarters are especially strong; so that it can run with considerable speed with its prey in its mouth. Its jaw is also powerful, but the teeth are blunted by the bones it is often compelled to break for food. It is very cowardly, is seldom seen in daylight, and at night is extremely cautious in its mode of attack. A gentleman who had joined a party of elephant-hunters, for some reason or other used to make his bed away from the fire and his companions. When the hunters arrived at Shoshong this gentleman as usual slept apart. His friends were awoke in the middle of the night by the vehement shouts of Captain ——, round whose solitary bed (as the tracks testified next morning) a wolf had paced for some time, until at last it mustered courage to lay hold of the dressed skin which served as a mattress, and to drag off its sleeping prize as fast as it could! The shouts of the alarmed captive, and the noise of the half-wakened sleepers at the fire, induced the wolf to relinquish its hold. When the captain next made his bed it was nearer the fire and his companions.

A boy who was for some time my own goatherd had some years before been seized by a wolf, which had crept through the frail fence round his mother's dwelling. Holding the boy by the head, the wolf made for the mountain as fast as it could. The boy's screams awoke the neighbours, who followed in pursuit. The little fellow seems to have had all his wits about him, for he seized a sharp-edged stone against which his hand was dragged in the wolf's flight, and applying it to his captor's face and eye, induced it to let him go, when he was recovered by his mother and the neighbours. He lost an ear on this occasion, and received wounds on the head and face which would have killed many children.

Another little child was taken by the wolf soon after we reached Shoshong, and was never seen again. The mother was annoyed in her house by "tampans," insects whose bite is more distressing than that of mosquitoes. Getting up in the night, she plied her brush on the floor of her hut, and having now well-nigh collected her tormentors, she asked her child to stand for a little outside the door while she swept them out. It so happened that a wolf was just passing the woman's hut at the time; it seized the child and made off with it to the hill.

After feeding on human bodies for a considerable period during the prevalence of small-pox, it seemed as if these creatures grew bolder when the supply ceased. A grown-up woman was dragged away one night, and so severely bitten that she died in the course of next day. Sekhome actually came to me and proposed that the woman's body should be exposed next night, and that I should put some strychnine into the flesh! I encouraged the chief rather to give rewards for every wolf's skin that his people brought to him; and when he demurred, I myself offered four pounds of lead for every skin—the skin to remain in the natives' possession. At this time we were every night disturbed by the cackling and howling and hideous laughing of these hyenas. One Sunday night our rest was disturbed by a specially loquacious fellow, who discoursed from the other side of the native town in front of our house, until I could stand it no longer, but had to go out half-dressed to chase it away. Close to our own dwelling no hyena dared come. I had at this time a very fine dog, of no particular breed, but perhaps nearer to a mastiff than anything else. He had been trained to guard sheep in the Colony; and seemed to have a profound contempt for his nightly combatants. If one ventured to approach my calf-pen, Nero drove it back at once, following it for some distance, and finishing up with a note of triumph which I soon learned to recognise. In the middle of the night I have heard their first encounter—the retreat of the hyena—the note of triumph; and next minute I would hear faithful Nero sniffing about the door or the calico window, as if to indicate to me that he was at his post.

One evening Sekhome informed me that he was going

to appoint two men to waylay the hyena beside the carcase of a horse which had that day died of "horse-sickness." It was therefore necessary for me to tie up my dog, otherwise no wolf could have passed. It was amusing to hear the whinings and pleadings of Nero, as he scented the approaching hyena, and was unable to go out to meet it. By-and-by I heard the report of a gun, and going down to the place where the men had been stationed, found them groping about in the dark. They said they were sure they had wounded the wolf, and were expecting every moment to stumble over its body! I went and loosened Nero, and brought him to the place. He was not long in finding the wounded animal, and commenced barking about one hundred yards up the hill. The men did not seem inclined to go up, so I led the way.

As we approached the spot where Nero stood baiting the wolf, the man whose gun was still loaded came up to me and said, "You know how to fire better than I do; take the gun." The previous bullet had injured one of the wolf's legs, but it was still able to make progress up the hill. Nero, however, now laid hold of him, and a bullet from the flint musket settled the question. The Bamangwato actually ate this horrid creature, although it was believed by all to be the one which had carried away the little child. Latterly its food must have been rather of an indigestible description; the greater part of a lady's boot being one of the articles found in its stomach by those who skinned it! The skin of both this animal and of the baboon are sacred to the use of the doctors or priests. No common person dare wear them.

The rains were delayed till November this year; and as a dry spring is here always an unhealthy one, the ravages of small-pox were succeeded by fever and dysentery. Mr. Price and I therefore sought a few days' change of air and scene for ourselves and our families in the open country of Mashue. As we had both purchased horses for our projected journey to the Zambese, we thought this a good opportunity for exercising both them and ourselves. One day Mr. Price left the waggons after breakfast to look for a giraffe or an eland, to supply the wants of our party. Some

hours afterwards a Bushman made his appearance to say that elands were grazing close in our neighbourhood. Guided by the Bushman and two of my own men, I started on the eland spoor. I found, however, that the track was not so fresh as I had been led to believe; and when some miles from the camp I saw from the tracks that Mr. Price had already lighted on it. While thinking of at once returning to the waggons, I was surprised to notice that the track of Mr. Price's horse led through places where a horse alone could go, but not with a rider upon it. On examining the tracks more carefully, we could see Mr. Price's own footmark on the ground. What had happened? If horse and rider had been thus separated, we must evidently hasten on and render assistance. So on we went for a considerable distance without reaching any solution of the cause of our anxiety. The Bushman now drew my attention to the setting sun and to a large thunder-cloud which seemed to advance in our direction. We reluctantly made our way for the camp, feeling that we could do no more to explain the mystery of the riderless steed.

Our own difficulties were soon to begin. We had gone much farther than I had thought. Darkness set in while we were still far from the waggons. In a short time no object whatever was visible. I could not see the Bushman in front of the horse, nor the horse's head, nor my own hand—for I held it out to try. By-and-by the Bushman said he could no longer see the path, and was afraid he would wander. I encouraged him to proceed; and while we went on, rain began to fall in torrents. The Bushman now sat doggedly down with his back against the stem of a tree, and would go no farther. In order to avoid disputes, I suppose, he refused to answer me in Sechwana, speaking only Bushman, which I did not understand. I now dismounted, already thoroughly drenched with rain. The only thing that was dry was my gun, which was now our only protection in a country infested with lions. The rain fell steadily for about three hours. I held the horse's bridle myself, afraid lest, if affrighted, he should suddenly disengage himself from the hands of one of the men.

When the rain abated we began to bethink ourselves of

a fire. I had some very good matches. We now groped in likely places for dry grass or wood; but everything seemed to be thoroughly soaked. My matches were exhausted before we got the fire to burn. One of my men had a tinder-box; we set to work again, and again failed.

The Bushman now began to move his limbs a little, and at length condescended to give us a piece of his mind.

MISSIONARY'S HOUSE.

"The white man's fire is quick and bright, but it soon burns out. It is not made for the rain. The Bechwana's tinder-box needs a great deal of puffing and blowing, and ends in smoke and darkness. Make way for the Bushman." He now produced his hunting-bag, still nearly dry; how he had kept it so was to me a mystery. Its contents were perfectly dry. He sought the flat piece of wood in which

the fire is produced, and placed it above some dry shavings of another and very inflammable tree, which he carried for the purpose. The slender rod which is used in producing the friction and the fire was next brought out; and to work the Bushman went, chanting meantime something which was possibly some spell or charm. Little bits of fire soon fell upon the shavings from the hole in which the friction-rod was revolving. When the operator thought there was enough of this fire produced, he commenced cautiously to blow, still keeping the flat piece of wood on the top. After failing once or twice, the Bushman succeeded in getting a fire. The next thing was to dry ourselves and our clothes, which was soon accomplished; and then we forgot our adventure in sleep, my saddle being a pillow and the soft moist sand a bed. Such a night in certain latitudes would give a person "his death of cold;" in Africa travellers often endure it, and are seldom the worse for it.

Next morning we hastened to the waggons to obtain an explanation concerning Mr. Price, and indeed to find if he had arrived at the camp. I found that my well-meant exertions had been entirely gratuitous, and that Mr. Price had reached the waggons at an early hour the previous afternoon! He had not met with any game, and after some hours' search, had saddled off his horse to let it graze for a few minutes before returning to the waggons. Now Bluebuck had an unfortunate trick of resisting all efforts to catch him when knee-haltered, until he found himself fairly surrounded. As on this occasion he had only his master to attempt to catch him, he could easily keep at a convenient distance, nibbling away at the grass in a provoking manner, and apparently enjoying the sport. At last Mr. Price was fain to carry the saddle himself, and drive his wilful horse before him, and in this fashion reached the waggons. This was the explanation of the mysterious tracks which had filled us with anxiety, and caused us to spend a dreary night in the rain and darkness. He whom we sought was comfortably ensconced in his waggon, whilst we, who flattered ourselves that we were to deliver him from some calamity, were benighted, and in our turn supposed to be lost!

But although Bluebuck had little ways of his own, which were not altogether pleasant, he was a fine strong horse, with wind which never failed. On this excursion, and mounted on Bluebuck, Mr. Price killed two giraffes, and I an oryx or gemsbuck, which is said to be the fleetest of the antelopes. I gave chase under the impression that the half-dozen creatures before me were elands, but as I approached I could see that they were gemsbucks or kukamas. I separated one from the rest, and Bluebuck seemed to enjoy his work, although at the last he needed considerable urging. We had a fine open country; the holes of the wild hog, and the trunks of fallen trees, being thus avoidable as we went along. All at once the gemsbuck turned sharp round, and stood on the defensive, its tongue visible in its open mouth, its nostrils dilated, its whole appearance betokening terror, anger, and exhaustion. In such circumstances this animal is more combative than eland or giraffe. A bullet speedily ended its sufferings. In the gemsbuck I had secured a nobler prize than the eland, although the flesh of the latter would have gone further in supplying the wants of our party. Following the custom of the country, I tied the brush of the tail to Bluebuck's saddle. There are many fleet horses in Bechwanaland that cannot run down a gemsbuck.

One day Mogomotsi, a headman among the Bamangwato, and a constant attendant at church and school, came to my house with a miserable-looking Makalaka woman, who was unable to stand erect, but crept on her hands and knees. Mogomotsi explained that as he was coming down the "kloof," or gorge, he found a number of boys stoning the poor woman, shouting out "Legoru!" (thief) at the top of their voices. It seemed the woman, in the extremity of hunger, had stolen some sour milk from a "lekuka," or leathern bottle, which was hanging in the sun, and, being perfectly friendless and helpless, the cruel heathen children were stoning her in the river. Turning to the poor wounded creature, I found two bright eyes fixed upon me, half in terror, half in supplication. She had no relatives. Her friends or owners had cast her off. They said she might as well die, seeing she could no longer work for them. I

noticed that in giving an account of herself she hesitated and stammered in her speech, and I learned that she had for some time been afflicted with St. Vitus's dance. Mogomotsi said, now that the Word of God had come to the town, it ought to prevent such cruel deeds, and therefore he had brought her to me.

A short time after, Sekhome made his appearance to pay me a visit, followed by perhaps twenty of his headmen. I showed him the woman, and told him how she had come to me. "It is well," said the chief, carelessly; "if you care to feed such a creature as that you may do so." "But what I want to know is this," I said, profiting by previous knowledge; "if this woman should get well under my care, and her friends or owners, who have now cruelly cast her out, come and demand her back again, against her own will, what side will you, as chief of the town, take? I call you to witness that she has been stoned with stones, having been driven away by her own people. If she does not wish to return to them after her recovery, will you sanction their compelling her to do so?" Sekhome answered at once, "The woman is as good as dead; if you raise her up again she is yours. Her Makalaka masters cannot claim her again." Turning to his followers, he called them to witness that the woman was now the missionary's if she lived. There was a broad grin on every face as the attendants responded to Sekhome, and all seemed to think that too many words had been wasted on such a subject.

Mabu (as she called herself) ensconced herself at once in the kitchen, and testified her gratitude by endeavouring to perform such little acts of service as she could render without walking, which was quite beyond her power. The regular supply of food, and some medicines given with the view of restoring and establishing her general health, produced a favourable change, and by-and-by she was able to move a few paces. For a long time, however, her gait was decidedly zigzag; and it required some courage to pass her as she steered her uncertain course to the kitchen with a pot or other vessel in her hand. If Mabu, however, came to grief (which was

not often), there was no louder or heartier laugh than her own. She strove to show her gratitude especially by her devotion to the wishes of Ma-Willie; and we were sincerely thankful that we were able to rescue a fellow-creature from a most cruel death, and introduce her to some of the enjoyments and privileges of a Christian household.

A CATTLE-HERD.

When we first resided at Shoshong we had little hope of being able to distinguish the Bamangwato by their features as one does in a crowd at home. They seemed to us to be all very much alike. But gradually as our eyes got accustomed to the colour of the people and to their dress, we began readily enough to distinguish between the features of one person and those of another. Indeed, we have since been often struck with the resemblance between certain Bamangwato and friends and acquaintances in our native country. I have sometimes called my wife, and without telling her my own opinion, asked her who a certain person was like who was then standing at the door? The

resemblance has often been so striking, that it also occurred to my wife, who at once mentioned the name of the friend or acquaintance of whom I had been thinking. Of course we were never guilty of the indiscretion of informing our friends in England that we had found their African counterpart! I was amused to find that the Bechwanas are equally bewildered at first among a number of white men. "How can I know him?" I have heard a native frequently say; "these white people are all so like one another." After having resided for years in the town, I frequently heard discussions in passing which showed that I was not readily recognised by the people.

Our Hanoverian colleague left again for the south after a short residence on the station; and in the beginning of 1863 Mr. Price started for supplies for our projected journey into the interior. I was thus left in charge of the station, and had some months of quiet and steady work—teaching during the week and preaching on the Sunday. I began to find that my knowledge of medicine greatly increased my influence with the people, and would be of real service to me as a missionary. The successful treatment of a case of fever in a near relative of Sekhome became widely known; and I found that the native doctors themselves came to me for advice. This young woman's fever had been improperly treated; and when I was called I found that she was considerably reduced and in high delirium. Afraid that I had come to kill her, she darted past me like an arrow, and endeavoured to make off. She refused to take the medicine I prescribed until her attendants told her it was not mine but Sekhome's. As soon as she came to herself and found out who had been her benefactor, she was as lavish of her expressions of gratitude as she had formerly been of her curses.

Another case illustrates the character of the people, and the manner in which our influence was extended. An old man with weak eyes, hearing of the cures of ophthalmia which had been effected by simple lotions, requested Sekhome to introduce him to me. "Be your own introducer," said the chief; "your sore eyes will speak for you; the teacher will be sure to give you 'eye-water.'" The old man made

his appearance at the door of our hut, and begged for medicine for his eyes. I gave him a lotion which did not colour the water in the cup, and told him how it was to be used. "But, Monare," said the man, "this is nothing but water." I told him to try it when he got home, and he would find it was an eye-lotion. He laid down the cup in displeasure, remarking that he was an old man and did not like to be a laughing-stock for a boy—meaning myself. So away he went to report in the courtyard how he had been slighted by the missionary, who would give him nothing to use for his eyes but pure water in a cup. The chief and several other headmen at once saw the mistake which he had made, and sent him back again. "I am ordered to take away your water," said the man to me, meaning that he still adhered to his own opinion, but had been commanded to use the lotion by the chief. Wishing to enjoy his surprise, I now poured some into his eyes; and as he had been very opinionative, and expected only pure water, the smartness of the lotion was increased by the suddenness of his surprise. The value of an eye-lotion, in the estimation of Bechwanas, is in proportion to the pain it gives in the eye. This old man went off into the courtyard with the cup in his hand, to show everybody how the white man had "charmed" pure water, and made it very "bogale" or powerful. His idea was, that if there was anything mixed in the water, it would be visible.

CHAPTER XIV.

A NATIVE WAR.

HEN the traders and hunters passed Shoshong from Moselekatse's country at the end of the hunting season of 1862, they brought the report that the Matebele meditated an attack upon the Bamangwato as soon as the rains should fall. Native wars are seldom or never carried on in winter. The waters are then too scarce on the road; the weather is too cold; and there are few edible roots procurable on the way, and no fruits standing in their enemies' gardens to supply the army with food. Dutchmen, on the other hand, usually wage war against natives in the winter, in order that they may be able with safety to use their horses. Since the first unsuccessful march of Dutchmen on foot against Hottentots near to Cape Town, soon after the arrival of the former in the country, horses have been regarded as indispensable to the success of a commando or war party. The Dutch carry their own supplies of food in their waggons, which always accompany them on such occasions; and the cold, which is not much felt by the Dutchmen, almost paralyses their enemies in the winter mornings.

The past history of the Bamangwato gave them no reason to presume on the friendship of the Matebele. They had dared to be independent—had rescued their cattle when in the hands of "machaha," and instead of submitting to pay tribute, had put the Matebele tax-gatherers to death. Still, twenty years had intervened since these

events had taken place. Missionaries were now residing with Moselekatse; and peaceful trading waggons passed every year to Matebeleland. Although Sekhome had opposed the entrance of Dr. Moffat into Moselekatse's country, both he and his people had lent a certain amount of credence to the messages which Dr. Moffat had brought back from their old enemy. Moselekatse informed Sekhome once and again that he had laid his spear in the water (which is the same as to beat it into a pruning-hook); that the Bamangwato might sleep; and that their cattle-posts might without fear be extended towards the confines of his territory. The Bamangwato showed their confidence in these protestations, by advancing as far as the river Motloutse with their cattle, which left about two days' journey between them and the Batalowta at Mahuku's town, who were vassals of Moselekatse, and at the same time relatives and friends of some of the Bamangwato.

Between the Matebele country and the Bamangwato there stretched an irregular line of Makalaka towns, the inhabitants of which spent a most wretched existence, having the difficult task to perform of serving two masters. They were in the power of the Matebele, who entered their towns when they chose, depriving them of their children as soon as they grew up to be of use. On the other hand, it was their interest to keep up friendly intercourse with their old masters, the Bamangwato, because if Moselekatse's rule became intolerable, they hoped to be received into the town of the Bamangwato. Sometimes in the same Makalaka town there would arrive scouts from the two opposing tribes, the Matebele and the Bamangwato, to "hear the news." In such circumstances the Bamangwato messengers, who were often themselves Makalaka by birth, were passed off as inhabitants of a neighbouring Makalaka town; or if they were Bamangwato, and unable to speak the Sekalaka language, they were hidden in a hut or amongst the rocks, until the Matebele soldiers left. The intolerable severity of the Matebele has broken up this line now, the people having fled to the Bamangwato for protection; but in 1862 there was a considerable Makalaka population stretching along the southern and south-western boundary

NATIVE WOMEN.

of Moselekatse's country. When the Bamangwato herdsmen advanced northwards with their cattle, they trusted to the assistance of these Batalowta and Makalaka to give them secret warning of the Matebele plans. A little uneasiness had been excited among the Bamangwato by the flight from Shoshong of an under-chief called Kirekilwe, who was related to the Batalowta at Mahuku's, and who was not long at the latter place when he passed on to Moselekatse's residence. Sekhome at once said, when he heard the reports of war brought out by the traders, "If war takes place, it will be through the treachery of Kirekilwe."

On Thursday, the 5th of March, definite intelligence reached Shoshong that a Matebele army was on its way to attack the Bamangwato. Already the farthest advanced cattle-posts of the latter tribe had fallen into their hands, and some of the herds had been put to death while defending their charge. A village of the inoffensive and industrious Machwapong had also been destroyed, only two of its inhabitants escaping to tell the tale. Such was the story told Sekhome by the dust-covered messenger, who himself had nearly fallen into the hands of the Matebele. Not knowing what was going on, I arrived in the public courtyard while the man was speaking, having finished my work in the school for that day. Sekhome recapitulated the items of the unwelcome intelligence to me, and to his sons, who had come with me from school.

By order of the chief, a man at once ascended some rocks at the outskirts of the town, and sounded loud and shrill the war-cry of the Bamangwato. Disturbed in their mid-day repose, in their skin-dressing and kaross-making, the men of the town obeyed the unwonted summons, and streamed into the "kotla," or courtyard, some armed with guns, and others with assegais and ox-hide shields. The news was laid before the people, and steps were at once taken to collect the cattle from the various posts, with the sheep and goats. All were to be driven toward the Bamangwato mountains, there being at this season of the year both grass and water on its lofty plateaus and within its hidden ravines. While some were despatched to the

posts, others were sent as sentinels to guard the paths radiating from the town, and a few picked men were sent forward as spies, to find out the present position of the enemy.

Having made all such arrangements, the chief now turned his attention to the force available for the defence of the town. Some parties were still in the country at their cattle-post or their hunting station; and while their friends were afraid that they would be cut off, the chief lamented their absence from their various regiments. Marching out of the town at the head of his men, Sekhome held what might be called a review, although it was certainly a different spectacle from what is indicated by that expression in civilised countries. There was no marching, no defiling, no sham fighting; but the chief, squatted on the ground, dealt out ammunition, &c., to those who required such supplies, inspected the faulty lock of one gun, and the frail stock of another—all the while enquiring after the absent, conversing with those around him, and listening to the account of the herdsmen who continued to arrive, and who had fled for life, after leaving their charge in the hands of the Matebele.

In passing my house after holding this "review," Sekhome jocularly asked me if I were going to help him against the Matebele? I replied in the negative, and reminded him that I was a promulgator of peace and goodwill amongst men; that I had no quarrel with the Matebele, and that I was persuaded they also would regard me as a neutral party. His reply was to the effect that Matebele warriors did not make nice distinctions, and that the colour of a man's skin was not easily discovered in the darkness of night. He then informed me that they expected to be attacked during the night, or very early in the morning. "In olden times," added the chief, "whilst our herdsmen were still informing us of the loss of our cattle, the Matebele themselves fell upon us before we could make any preparation for self-defence; but to-night they will find us ready; and should they choose to enter the town from the plain they will find it empty."

Sekhome having given orders that all the women and

children should take refuge on the mountains, and that all property should be removed thither also, a strange and melancholy spectacle presented itself to the eye. The several narrow paths leading to the top of the steep rugged mountains were for some time densely crowded with those fleeing from the bloodthirsty Matebele. Many mothers carrying large bundles on their heads had also a child on their back, while the rest of the family struggled up the ascent before them. For some time the old men and women and servants and children followed each other up the hill as closely as people do in Cheapside. It will be remembered that my fellow-missionaries, with their families, were then absent from the station. That night therefore Mrs. Mackenzie was the only female in the town of the Bamangwato, and our children the only little ones who had not been removed to the mountain fastnesses.

People passed to and fro the whole night under arms; every one was on the alert, and we slept as little as the Bamangwato. About ten o'clock the young chiefs paid us a visit, with several of those who attended church and school—surrounded by whom I offered up prayer before our door in the bright moonlight. I besought a blessing on those who fought for home and family and property; and prayed that God would frustrate the counsels of the nation delighting in war. Fully expecting that an engagement would take place before we met again, I said to Khame in parting that I hoped it would be seen that those who feared God would be found to be the bravest in defence of all that was dear to them. During the night we collected our letters, portraits, accounts, &c., in a little box, so as to be easily removed. My wife also selected some provisions, which, with the children's clothes, were placed in readiness in case of sudden alarm. Although we could not sleep like our children, we could commend them and ourselves to the merciful protection of God our heavenly Father, and enjoy the peace of those whose minds are stayed on Him.

At length the morning of Friday dawned without any attack having taken place. The cattle, sheep, and goats from the outposts came pouring in, and were hastily driven

up the mountains. The "kloof" for a time resounded with the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep and goats, and the shouts of their drivers. This morning, in stating his plan of defence, the chief informed me that, should the enemy make the attempt from the plain, they were to be allowed to enter the town, and to set it on fire if they chose; that a number of cattle were to be kept in sight (as a bait for the Matebele) on the side of the mountain behind Mr. Price's house, and opposite my own; and that the fight would therefore take place, as it were, on our premises. Sekhome said he was sure to beat them on this ground; and that should they approach from the plain, he would not risk an engagement elsewhere. He added that he was sorry our houses were in the way, but that he could not help it. In the event of the Matebele endeavouring to reach the town from the north side, which was nearest the scene of the depredations, the Bamangwato were to meet them on a "haugh" in the heart of the mountains, and, if beaten, were to fall back on the vantage-ground before referred to.

After seriously considering our position in connection with the statement of Sekhome, and taking into account the merciless character of the Matebele, I came to the conclusion that it would be best for my family to retire to the mountains until the danger became less imminent. When I heard one cattle-herd after another narrate the cowardly and bloody deeds which had been enacted at the cattle-posts, my resolution was confirmed. Whilst they remained in the house I could not but feel uneasy as to the result of a midnight rush of such savages, every one of whose spears had repeatedly drunk the blood of the aged and the decrepit, the defenceless female and the tender infant.

"Let Ma-Willie go on the mountain beside my mother," said the sincere and affectionate Khame, the eldest son of Sekhome, "and the Matebele will then reach her only when we are all dead." I consented to this, and my young friend kindly furnished me with a few men, who conveyed to the top of the mountain the articles which we had resolved to remove from the house. Accompanied by these people and by our servants, Mrs. Mackenzie with the newly-

awakened and wondering children took her departure at early dawn. I afterwards followed with the cattle, and found my little family seated on the grass beneath a tree, their nearest neighbour being the chief wife of Sekhome. It was Wednesday evening of the following week before they left their refuge on the mountain top; and the native women remained for two or three days longer.

I cannot describe this life on the mountain as having been at all pleasant; for the place itself was well known to be a haunt for wolves and tigers; in fact, but a few days before, a sheep had been killed in daylight not many hundred yards from where Mrs. Mackenzie and the little ones slept in the open air. But we heard nothing of such unwelcome visitors, and cannot but think that the overwhelming rush of people into their haunts must have driven both wolves and tigers to seek a lair elsewhere.

While we were scaling the mountains on Friday morning, the Bamangwato had assembled in the "haugh" already referred to. It seems that there was a good deal of talking among the headmen, and Sekhome, who besides being chief is also "ngaka" (doctor or priest), engaged earnestly in reading his dice, and repeating his incantations. He was interrupted by Khame, who very abruptly informed his father that he was taking up too much time with these things; and that as for himself, he (Khame) wished to fight and have done with it. The chief, who felt proud of his son, "pocketed" the insult which in his priestly character he had sustained, and immediately ordered out the two youngest "mepato," or regiments, viz., that of Khame and of his brother Khamane. The people were pleased with the conduct of their young chief, and several old men, who of course did not belong to his regiment, tried to join it as it moved off, but were seen by Sekhome, and ordered back. The two chiefs next in rank to Sekhome, however, attached themselves to Khame's party, followed by their men.

So far as I can judge, the whole force under Khame did not exceed two hundred. Of these, the majority had guns, and about eight were mounted on horseback. Before he rode off, Khame was addressed by Sekhome, to

the effect that he must not imagine he was going on an elephant hunt; that he was marching against men, and not merely men, but Matebele.

It was late in the afternoon before the Bamangwato

NATIVE WARRIOR WITHOUT HEAD-DRESS.

came in sight of the Matebele, who, contrary to their usual custom, had been advancing slowly, apparently in no hurry to attack the town. They were marching in three companies, two of which were together, and these the Bamangwato attacked.

At first the "machaga" (Matebele soldiers), who were armed with spears and shields, made light of the guns, imitating their report; but they soon changed their mind. Moving in compact bodies, they found that every ball told on some of them; so that, when charged by those on horseback, they gave way, some of them throwing down their arms and fleeing. These, however, were rallied by the others shouting to them that they were disobeying the great law of Moselekatse, which forbids any of his warriors to run from the enemy. But while the day was thus with the Bamangwato, the third company of Matebele, which had been following up a cattle-track at some distance, hearing the report of fire-arms, hastened to the scene of action, and seeing how matters were going, crept along under cover of the tall grass, until they had got close behind the Bamangwato. They advanced until they were discovered, when they sprang to their feet, and, raising their wild war-cry, rushed as one man on the forces of Khame. The retreating Matebele, finding that their comrades had come to their assistance, turned round on their pursuers; so that now the Bamangwato found themselves surrounded by the enemy. Khame shouted to his men to keep together and fight their way out; but his authority was soon at an end. Many of the older Bamangwato men had shown symptoms of fear from the beginning, and fought only after they saw that Khame and his young comrades were gaining the day. Now, when they beheld "machaga" on every side, the old fear of the Matebele seemed to return to them, and they fled in all directions, the horsemen doing their best to cover their retreat. The Matebele did not pursue them far; and the Bamangwato returned during the night, leaving about twenty dead on the field. According to trustworthy reports afterwards received, the loss on the other side was much greater.

In the course of the retreat of the Bamangwato, one of them found himself at some distance from the others, and closely pursued by a Letebele. His gun was loaded, and cocked too, but he had not courage enough to enable him to stand and fire; so he ran as fast as he could, carrying his gun on his shoulder. To the surprise of both pursuer

and pursued, something having caught the trigger, bang went the gun, its terrified bearer still running at the top of his speed. Whether the ball had passed somewhat near to the Letebele behind is not known, but at any rate he at once gave up the pursuit, evidently of opinion that he was altogether too dangerous a fellow who could thus fire over his shoulder without slackening his pace!

Another man was brought to me five days after the battle with nine spear wounds, all deep, and one completely maiming one of his legs. He said he had shot three Matebele, but was surrounded while re-loading, his gun taken from him, and he himself repeatedly stabbed, and left for dead. Coming to himself during the night, he crawled out of the way to a place of safety, but it took him five days to creep home, as he could not walk. I dressed his wounds, which, being all clean cuts, soon healed, and in a few weeks the man was quite well.

Late on Friday night, Patopato, a Matebele refugee, who had long resided under Sekhome's protection, and who had been sent as a spy to observe the movements of the advancing Matebele, returned with the message that a detachment of the enemy was on its way round the mountain; and that therefore the attack on the town might be expected from the plain on the south of the town.

Keeping watch over my premises, I heard about midnight the shrill war-cry rise from the rocks near the kotla. It resounded through the deserted town, was re-echoed by the mountains, and caught up and repeated by the sentinels on the heights. Every one took it for granted that an engagement was at hand. My wife told me that she had been surrounded by native women a minute before the cry was heard; in a few minutes more she found herself alone with her three children on the mountain top. She could see nothing in the moonlight but the rocks, into whose dark caverns her companions had suddenly rushed.

On Saturday it was confidently expected by the Bamangwato that they would be attacked, and their expectations were confirmed by the report of the scouts that the Matebele were advancing. It was taken for granted that after enemies whom they formerly despised as unworthy of their

steel, had met them in the open plain, the Matebele war-
riors would consider themselves in honour bound to vindi
cate their character by destroying the town and gardens o
those who been guilty of such temerity. But the day an
night passed, and Sabbath dawned, and still the Matebel
came not.

On Sunday I conducted divine service in my house, th
congregation under arms, and momentarily expecting th
news that the attack had begun. Strange to say, I ha
that morning come, in the course of regular expositions o
the Sermon on the Mount, to the 43rd and 44th verse
of the fifth chapter of Matthew: "Ye have heard that i
hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hat
thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies
bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you
and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecut
you." This was the "lesson of the day" for my congrega
tion as they stood round me in arms. I endeavoured t
explain to them that the covetousness and selfishness, whic
were at the bottom of all aggressive wars, would yet be over
come by the power of Christianity in the world, teachin
men to love their neighbours as themselves. But in th
meantime, while tribes existed which still revelled in blood
shed, and lived after the manner of beasts of prey, thei
neighbours must stand on the defensive. It was as reason
able for a man to defend his person and his home fro
the assegai of midnight assassins as from the assault c
lion or snake. God had given the man a stronger bod
than the woman, that he might work for her and defen
her. A man's mother, or wife, or sister, ought to be reache
by enemies only over his lifeless body. But the spirit c
the covetous man engaged in an aggressive war, and tha
of the Christian man defending his family and his home
were widely different. The one was a dark and murderou
spirit, finding satisfaction in pillage, in outrage, and i
bloodshed. The other was a noble and worthy feelin
stern to the assailant, and yet regretful because it was nece
sary to defend human life at such a cost. Aggressors fough
for what was before them, and not their own, the pos
sessions and the homes of their neighbours. The defender

fought, not for anything before them, or in the possession of others, but in defence of what was their own, and dear to their hearts, in their homes behind them. Gloomy malice filled the heart and blackened the visage of the one combatant; mildness and calm determination animated the other. The one desired only the ruin and destruction of

NATIVE WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

his adversaries; the other went forth to fight that he might preserve and build up, and cherished no hatred in his breast towards his misguided fellow-men. "Thus," I concluded, "while you defend yourselves and your relatives from the Matebele, do not give way to the spirit of revenge. Wish well to the Matebele. Wish that they may give up war, and visit you only on peaceful errands. Wish that the teaching

and spirit of Jesus Christ may find its way into their hearts, and prevent them from coming to desolate the homes of their neighbours any more." We concluded by an earnest prayer for the Matebele, in which I feel assured I was heartily joined by some of my audience.

The lesson of that morning was communicated to many who were not assembled for worship. "The teacher had said that God would bless and help those whose minds were not filled with covetousness, but who were only defending their own homes and families." Sekhome himself came and expressed his pleasure at the "word" which had been spoken, and said that "I must pray very much that God would help them, and give them the victory." The Bamangwato headmen came also to speak of the bravery and cheerfulness of the young chiefs and others who were members of the congregation. "We were told," said they, "that when a man became a Christian he was bound not to fight in any cause, and that his relatives would have to defend the believer as well as his wife and family. We therefore expected that all the 'men of the word of God' would have ascended the mountain with the women and children. But to-day those who pray to God are our leaders."

"In forbidding covetousness," said an old man, "the word of God stops all war, for all Bechwana wars are begun through covetousness."

In my own retirement I craved that wherever the lessons which I ventured to teach in the name of Christ fell short of what He himself would have given at Shoshong, he would mercifully forgive, and lead His servant into full obedience to His will.

It rained heavily during the night of Sunday; it was as dark as pitch, and in every way suitable for deeds of blood. My poor wife had to draw herself and the children into small compass below the bush, for the "kaross" above did not afford much shelter. I spent the weary hours of the night over our fire, which consisted of one huge log, the burning end of which the rain failed to extinguish. Now was the time for the Matebele to attack; for the fire-arms of the Bamangwato got more or less out of order through exposure to the rain, especially the old-fashioned flint muskets, whose

owners had frequently nothing but a tattered handkerchief with which to cover the lock. To the astonishment of all, the night, which had been one of discomfort and anxiety, passed over in peace. Early in the morning, however, Sekhome's advanced sentinels brought the intelligence that the Matebele had advanced to the foot of the mountains, within a few minutes' walk of the place where the Bamangwato lay in waiting for them. Every one was in readiness for immediate action. The chief gave orders that no cattle should descend from the hill to drink. We could distinctly hear the report of the guns fired by the Matebele, being those which had fallen into their hands in the fight.

After an hour or two spent in this way, it became evident that the enemy did not intend to advance on the town. They were reported as eating water-melons, and destroying what they could not eat in the outlying Bamangwato gardens. It was evident that they were ready again to fight in the open plain; and it was equally plain that they were afraid to venture into the narrow passes leading into the town of the Bamangwato. In a short time the report came that the enemy were moving off, and afterwards it was ascertained that they were retracing their own steps, and not, as it was imagined, moving round the mountain to the more accessible side of the town. The news had a wonderful effect in brightening up the countenances of the Bamangwato, although they were not without suspicion that the retreat was a feint; and that, as in olden time, the Matebele would return when they thought their enemies would be off their guard. Men were therefore selected for the purpose of following the enemy and watching their movements. They were to sleep where they slept, and in the event of their returning to the attack, were to hasten before them and inform the chief. On Tuesday morning a second party was sent off; and in the afternoon the first returned bringing the intelligence that the Matebele were still retreating. On Wednesday, it was ascertained that the oxen, sheep, and goats which they had secured, and which had remained at a distance under strong guards, were being collected by their captors, who were now in full retreat homewards. Feeling convinced that all danger was

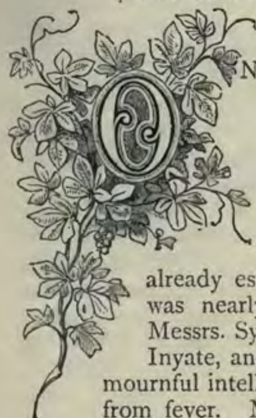
now over, we that evening re-entered our house, thankfully cherishing the hope that the disturbance and anxiety were now at an end.

On Thursday the message was brought to Sekhome that a Letebele, found without spear or shield, had been taken prisoner, and that they awaited his orders as to his fate. The order was that he should be put to death. I learned this from Khame, who said the men who were to kill him had already left the town. I immediately sought the chief, but was kept waiting some time. At length he appeared, and I expostulated with him both as to the cruelty and bad policy of such conduct. He at once despatched a messenger to countermand his order, professing that he had given me the man's life. But what was my regret while I was still in the courtyard to see the men first despatched advance into the kotla, and announce that the chief's command had been obeyed. The poor defenceless wretch had been put to a cruel death, although, as I afterwards learned, he pleaded with pitiable earnestness that his life should be spared. I was gratified to find that all who attended church were opposed to such revengeful bloodshed. Indeed, it was with the idea that I might be able to save the man's life that the young chief had informed me of the circumstance. This was certainly acting in the spirit of our last Sunday's discourse.

In this incursion the warriors of Moselekatse more than sustained their character for bloodthirstiness. They butchered old men, women, and little children, at the Bamangwato cattle-posts. Young women and boys they spared, driving them as captives; the former to cultivate their gardens, and the latter to be trained as "machaga," or warriors.

CHAPTER XV.

REINFORCING THE MATEBELE MISSION.



ON the arrival of my friends Messrs. Price and J. S. Moffat at Shoshong, in the end of June, 1863, our consultations were not, as we had at one time hoped they would be, concerning the mission to the north of the Zambese, but with reference to the continuance of the mission already established among the Matebele. It was nearly a year since we had heard from Messrs. Sykes and Thomas, the missionaries at Inyate, and their last letters had contained the mournful intelligence of the death of Mrs. Thomas from fever. Mr. and Mrs. Moffat were extremely anxious to proceed to the assistance of their friends; but the disturbed state of the country presented an obstacle to their proceeding alone.

After protracted deliberation, "it was thought necessary," as I wrote to the Directors at the time, "temporarily to reinforce the Matebele mission at this unsettled juncture, on account of the indifferent health of some members of the mission, and the contemplated absence of others from the scene of their labours. The Directors, I thought, would agree that it would be very unadvisable for any one family to be left alone in such a country as the Matebele; and it was in order to prevent this possibility that I undertook the present journey. My own health was very good; and it was

some time since Mrs. Mackenzie had had an attack of fever. We were therefore happy in making the present attempt; hoping that, having assisted the Matebele mission to weather a storm, our own path for the future would be made plain to us." In fact, I was not without hope that I might afterwards meet with such encouragement as would induce me to remain in the Matebele country or to visit some of the tribes beyond it. Although it was abundantly evident that the traditional war policy of the Matebele was not to be given up all at once by the chief and people, I also hoped to be able to represent to Moselekatse some of the evil consequences of war with the Bamangwato, in stopping communication between the Matebele and the south, from which quarter they were annually visited by European traders. Sekhome gave me a half-defiant message to Moselekatse, in which he compared himself to a certain insignificant but pertinacious insect, well known to both Matebele and Bamangwato; but I consulted my own feelings and Sekhome's interests by not delivering it.

At Palatshwe, about three days from Shoshong, we came to the large inclosures which the Matebele had built for the reception of the stolen cattle of the Bamangwato. Here Mangwane, the son of Moselekatse, had his head-quarters, while the Matebele forces were scouring the country. During the rest of our journey, not a day passed that we did not see in these fresh cattle-pens along the road the evidence of the recent presence in the country of the warlike people to whom we were journeying.

The country lying to the north-east of Shoshong is intersected by a number of rivers which are all tributaries of the Ouri or Limpopo. The Mahalapye flows close to the Bamangwato mountains, and was the first of these rivers which we crossed. The Mitle and the Teuane were only a few miles beyond; and the Lotsane, with its bed of slate rock, was the next river on our route. Near to Serule we passed the ruins of a village whose inhabitants had been killed or scattered by the Matebele. Not a soul was visible in the country—not a fresh human foot-mark on the sand. The broad trail of the Matebele soldiers had swept all life before it.

BUFFALO HUNT.

Before reaching the Seribe river, which joins the Motloutse a short distance below the road, a troop of buffaloes passed our mid-day resting-place. Some of the men seized their guns and fired, but without result. The dogs gave chase and caught a calf, whose bellowing we soon heard in the forest. It was of considerable size, which I suppose explains why its mother did not return to defend it or to seek it. When we came up to it, Mr. Moffat's dogs and my own were holding fast the indignant animal in spite of its violent efforts to get away. A bullet carefully placed put an end to the struggle, and supplied the party with some veal. In hunting buffaloes the object is to secure a cow in good condition, the bull buffalo being very dry and tough eating. A troop of buffaloes pursued by mounted huntsmen keep together for a short distance, but gradually the old bulls drop to one side under the shelter of the thick bushes. These grim-looking animals remain here in ambush, and spring out upon the unwary hunter, should he unfortunately pass that way. But experienced men keep their eyes on such awkward customers, and give them a wide berth by not following exactly upon the track of the buffaloes.

I once rode seventy miles to attend a Dutch hunter, who, strange to say, had not only been waylaid but shot by one of these old buffalo bulls. It rushed from behind a bush upon the Dutchman, throwing both horse and rider to the ground with the fury of its first attack. It gored the horse to death before it could recover its feet, and next attacked the rider. The Dutchman says he lay as flat as he could on the ground, in order to prevent the curved horns of the buffalo from getting below him to toss him. Whilst irresolute what to do next, the buffalo unfortunately trod upon the Dutchman's gun as it lay on the ground, and some twigs having got about the hair-trigger, the gun went off, and the contents of the barrel went through the Dutchman's bent arm, entering above the elbow and passing out below it. The buffalo was frightened by its own exploit, and left the wounded hunter, with his gun and saddle and wounded arm, to make his way on foot to his waggon. Several splinters of bone came away, and the man again recovered the use of his arm.

I was detained a little behind Mr. J. S. Moffat while disposing of the young buffalo behind my spare waggon, so that it was nearly sunset before we came to the Seribe, where we spent the night.

The Motloutse river, which we next crossed, had on its bank the ruins of the most advanced cattle-post of the Bamangwato, and the first which had fallen into the hands of the Matebele in the late raid. Crossing the Shashe and the Tatie, we were now in the heart of what was until recently one of the most famous resorts of the elephant.

In the beginning of August we crossed the Inkwezi river, and halted near Mahuku's town. Instead, however, of presenting the usual indications of a large and industrious population, the whole country looked forlorn and desolate. The long grass was waving over the untrodden paths which led to the gardens from the town. The corn, pumpkins, and melons, and other fruits, were standing unharvested in the fields. I visited the town itself, which had been a few months before the scene of life and activity, and found only charred ruins, with here and there the skeletons of some of its former inhabitants. Soon after our arrival, a handful of Batalowta descended to our waggons from the fastnesses of the mountain, which had now become their abode since their escape from the general ruin of their people. From them we heard the confirmation of reports which we had previously received, concerning the recent massacre of this tribe by their masters, the Matebele. Strange to say, in the midst of this slaughter the Matebele spared all the Batalowta who had been employed as servants by the missionaries at Inyate. Having no idea of the connection between master and servant as obtaining in England, they seemed to regard these men as the property of the missionaries, and therefore not to be put to death with the rest of their townsmen.

Three of these Batalowta were despatched on the Monday after our arrival at Mahuku's, to inform Moselekatse of our approach. No stranger is admitted into the Matebele country without the permission of the chief first asked and obtained. And after he enters the country, if he is a

trader or hunter, he is under constant surveillance until h
is again beyond the boundary of the Matebele countr
Taking it for granted that Moselekatse would admit u
we did not wait at Mahuku's for an answer, as is sometime
done, but slowly followed in the rear of our messenger.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 19th August, ou
attention was directed to the fierce barking of our dogs a
something among the neighbouring trees, and some of th
men, having taken their guns, proceeded to the spo
Hearing shots fired, Mr. Moffat and I followed. My wi
handed me what we both took for granted was my rifl
and I hastened to the scene of action. As I approached
was met by my two drivers, who were running at fu
speed. I inquired what was chasing them, but they ha
no time to tell me. Proceeding a little farther, I saw
black rhinoceros cow with its calf, the latter of which wa
baited by the dogs. I came up just in time to see one o
my dogs tossed into the air by the enraged mother. Sadl
shaken, but with no bones broken, "Celt" crept awa
among the bushes, and did not show face again until th
danger was past. The rhinoceros had already receive
several shots from Mr. Moffat and from the men: I no
discharged the contents of both barrels into its body, bein
perhaps fifty yards from the animal. When I fired th
second time the rhinoceros staggered. The calf was no
shot, and another bullet or two were placed in the body o
the mother, when the men said it was dead, and began t
advance towards it. I had just been observing its littl
eye, and saw there was life in it still, when a sudden move
ment of its body sent back at the top of their speed thos
who were advancing. But it was only a spasmodic jerk
The creature was unable to rise again to its feet. It was
however, too stubborn to roll over in the helplessness o
some wounded animals, and died resting on its knees.

"Hallo! who has been firing at a rhinoceros with smal
shot?" asked some one as soon as they went up to th
body. Every one now looked at his gun. To my chagri
I found that I was the hero of the small shot. I had bee
riding in Mr. Moffat's waggon that afternoon, and in m
absence my driver had begged my rifle from my wife. Whe

I afterwards hastily asked for it, she mechanically handed to me my fowling-piece, which was also loaded and capped! It was amusing now to remember the applause with which the men had greeted my second shot, and the staggering ot the rhinoceros! The noise of the report may have disconcerted the animal, but certainly the hail of small shot did it no harm whatever, only mottling its hide so as to resemble what a rhinoceros with small-pox might be! As the sun was nearly set, we drew our waggons up to the two carcasses, and there spent the night. Before the waggons were unyoked, the children had climbed on the back of the rhinoceros, and were examining its horns and fierce little eye. The meat from the ribs of the rhinoceros is considered best; and it is said the flesh of the mohohu, or white rhinoceros, is very good. I cannot recommend that of the borile or black rhinoceros, although with the appetite of camp life in Africa it was palatable enough.

Two messengers from Moselekatse met us here next morning before we had commenced our day's journey. They had brought the "mouth" of the king to us. Of course Mr. J. Moffat was going home; the chief was glad to hear of his return; but Moselekatse ordered me to go back; the chief did not wish to see one of the Bamangwato. I learned, however, that this decision was not final; one of the men was to return with such explanations as I might have to give. Mr. Moffat and I went over our position and our objects with the different tribes where we resided as missionaries, and that my visit to the Matebele had no political meaning whatever. Having already ascertained that our friends at Inyate were in good health, I might have returned at once; but I confess I felt a strong disinclination to do so. I did not like the indignity of being sent about my business in so summary a manner; but above that, I felt it would enhance our reputation as missionaries among the natives were we able to pass over from one contending tribe to another during the time of war, and be recognised as the friends of all and the enemies of none.

Being without water at our present encampment, the soldiers, with some reluctance, agreed that we should go

forward to where we could obtain some for ourselves an
our oxen. There being none at Boherehere river, we ac
vanced to Kumalo, there to await the final decision of th
chief. We learned in our conversations with the messer
gers that the announcement that "Sekhome's missionary
was coming with "Yonie," had given rise to a good deal c
pleasantry and joking at the court of Moselekatse. "Mak
haste and milk some of Sekhome's cows for Sekhome's mis
sionary," said the chief to those near him, "for he must b
hungry after so long a journey." This was received wit
roars of laughter. "Why, if I admit this man," he addec
"he will see everything in the country, and then return an
inform Sekhome." One of the chief's wives, greatly puzzle
at my coming, exclaimed, "What crimes do these whi
men commit which cause them to flee from their ow
country in this way?"

On Thursday, the 21st August, the messenger returne
from the chief—his feet and legs covered with dust, b
with a smiling countenance. Instead of delivering h
message to us as we expected, he passed us with a word
greeting, and sitting down before his fellow-soldier, wh
was, I suppose, his superior, narrated to him the rep
which the chief had sent. After he had fully mastere
the report, the head man of the two now addressed us, ar
announced that "I was to come on; but where was m
present to the chief, and that of Mr. J. Moffat? He ha
not seen them."

The next Sunday we spent at a river called Tlapa Bal
(Wizard's Stone), where Mr. Moffat preached in Setebe
to the people of the neighbouring village. A considerab
number of soldiers were present when the service bega
but before it was over they had all left except one or tv
old men, who at the conclusion demanded "tusho,"
reward for their good conduct! I noticed that almc
every grown-up man had his body marked somewhere wi
the cuts of the spear or battle-axe. I had afterwar
frequent opportunities of noticing the same thing. Tl
vast majority of the men I saw in the country bore tl
marks of these hand-to-hand encounters with their enemie
I have heard it said that an African's head is the la

place at which an adversary ought to aim with sword or spear: but the Africans do not think so themselves, for the majority of the wounds which I saw among the Matebele were in the head, or near to it. With their scars I noticed an orderliness among the soldiers, and a politeness on the part of their officers, which I had not seen among the Bechwanas.

We reached the camp of Moselekatse on Monday afternoon, but did not

RHINOCEROS.

see the chief till next morning. He was not living i
a town, but at the foot of a mountain not far from
village called Sesentene. His four waggons were draw
up near to each other; behind these were the tem
porary huts of his harem and servants, closed in by a hedg
of thorn branches, and in front a large pen for cattle an
another for sheep and goats. Such were the "quarters
in which we found the chief of the Matebele.

And now for my reception by this African despot
whose name was a terror far and near. After passing th
little booths and the waggons, we were shown into th
sheep-pen, at the door of which sat a number of soldiers
A fire had been placed in the middle of the pen, and nea
to it, seated in an old-fashioned arm-chair, the gift of Dr
Moffat, sat Moselekatse. As we advanced, we got each
warm and rather lengthy shake of the hand, the attendant
shouting lustily, "Great king! man-eater!" &c. We too
our places on the ground, opposite the arm-chair, and ha
a full view of its occupant, who was the object of this abjec
praise.

We saw an old frail man, so frail that he could no
stand by himself or walk a single step. His legs wer
paralysed; his arms moved with difficulty, and in a spas
modic manner; his head was grey, and his face bore th
wrinkles of old age. The only clothing of the chief at th
time of our introduction to him consisted of an Englis
blanket brought closely round his loins, and a naval officer'
cap on his head. An old greatcoat, the original colour o
which was to me matter of speculation, served as a footstool
and was removed with the chair when the chief desired t
change his position. I sought in the countenance of Mose-
lekatse some explanation of his bloody and successful career
but I cannot say that I found it in the face of the old ma
before me. He had a good head and large eyes, almost
the largest I have seen in an African face.

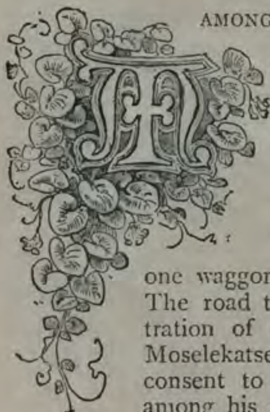
And if we were in the presence of one who could listen
unmoved to the voice of justice and mercy, we had little
to remind us of the fact. A bright-eyed child sat near the
chief, and waited upon him. He was a captive, and his
parents had no doubt been ruthlessly murdered. He sat

beside the arm-chair of Moselekatse like a favourite lap-dog, the chief occasionally taking notice of him, and smiling at his apparently happy looks. Some of Moselekatse's "wives," of whom I was told there were hundreds in the country, sat near to their lord, ready to obey his slightest wish. We were presented with "boyalwa," or native beer, in a drinking vessel neatly woven of grass. The women held in their hands elegant spoons, also made of grass, for skimming away flies or other objects from the beer. No notice was taken of the two greatcoats which we had sent on the previous day as presents; but immediate application was made for additional "help," as the Matebele express it. However, our reception on the whole was gracious enough, as things go there. Moselekatse seemed to lose sight of my connection with Sekhome, and recognised me as a missionary from England or Kuruman—the difference or distance between those two places not being understood by the Matebele.

Leaving the sylvan abode of Moselekatse, near Sesentene, we reached Inyate on Saturday, the 29th of August, having been more than a month, including all delays, in performing a journey of about 330 miles. We had now the pleasure of again meeting our dear friends, Mr. Thomas and Mr. and Mrs. Sykes. This pleasure, however, had its sad alloy in the absence of Mrs. Thomas. All we could see of her, except in the features of her two little boys, was her grave. The influence which this lady had obtained over the Matebele was attested by all. The rude and boisterous soldiers were mild and civil to her. They could be rough to others, they were always gentle as lambs to Ma-Mogele. She spoke the simple words of gospel to the little children who came to serve her, to the women who sometimes visited her, and even to the men as they crowded round her door. Her death from fever in June, 1862, was a heavy loss, not only to her husband and children, but to the mission at Inyate; and the Matebele mourned for her with a sorrow as deep as their admiration had been high.

CHAPTER XVI.

AMONG THE MATEBELE.



OSELEKATSE was visited by hi old friend Dr. Moffat in 1856, an thus a waggon-track was made t his country. It is the opinion c all natives that if a country is t remain unknown to Englishmer a waggon must not be allowed t traverse it. They say, "Wher one waggon goes, another is sure to follow. The road to the Matebele was soon an illus tration of this. In 1857 Dr. Moffat pai Moselekatse a second visit, and obtained hi consent to the establishment of a missio among his people; and in 1859 he returne with his son, Mr. John Moffat, and witl Messrs. Sykes and Thomas. The track of the missionar soon became a frequented road, upon which, at all seasons are now to be found the waggons of traders and hunters.

During the first two months after the arrival of th mission party in the Matebele country, their position wa a very unpleasant and trying one. After the first civilitie were over, the manner of both chief and people completel changed. Confidence and regard gave place to distrus and unconcealed aversion. One morning, about thre weeks after their arrival, the missionaries observed an un usual stir about the chief's quarters. He was leaving fo another locality; the waggons were already moving; anc yet the guests had received no intimation or explanatior from Moselekatse. Having no oxen in the country, they

were of course fixtures where they stood. Dr. Moffat resolved to ascertain the meaning of this movement, and followed the receding party for some distance for that purpose. But as soon as he approached the chief's waggon, he was turned back by the attendants of Moselekatse. The old attachment between the chief and his friend was for a time entirely inoperative.

As to the young missionaries, their first impressions of Moselekatse were very unfavourable. They were disappointed at the manner of their reception. Instead of generosity, or even friendliness, they met with excessive selfishness, meanness, and duplicity. Instead of their imaginary "noble savage," they found a greedy, unreasonable, and cunning old man. But they had to content themselves with the exercise of patience, a virtue which is needed everywhere, but nowhere more than in the establishment of a new mission in Southern Africa. Insulting messages were now sent to them from the chief. They were told that they were spies, and had come to find out the resources of the Matebele country. They must pay the chief for his assistance in pulling their waggons during the latter part of their journey. One waggon-load of goods must be given to him at once, &c.

For about two months the mission party were virtually prisoners. They were forbidden to leave the waggons or to kill game; and the Matebele were commanded not to sell them food, or even milk for their coffee. They asked permission to purchase cows; the chief replied he had ivory but no cows for sale, and he wished in return guns and ammunition. Determined not to compromise their character at the very outset, the missionaries refused to purchase a single pound of ivory. They explained that other men would come and trade with him; they had come to teach his people. The more powerful and dictatorial the chief, the more necessary was it that those who were to reside with him should, at the outset, avoid all occasion of future complication or misunderstanding. Moselekatse's views concerning a missionary must fall to the ground, and they must be received on the simple footing of "teachers of the Word of God." Once established in this position, it

would be for them to render such daily services and favours as their feelings might dictate, and as their opportunity and skill enabled them to perform.

At length, on the 15th December, the missionaries received instructions to meet the chief at the town to which he had removed. On the 23rd they were shown the fountain and valley of Inyate; and Monyebe, the chief's officer, told them that if the situation pleased them, Moselekatse granted them both the fountain and the land, to occupy and to cultivate according to their own ideas. This was a happy deliverance from their difficulties. The missionaries gave thanks to God, who had so far changed the minds of the Matebele, and given them acceptance in their eyes as teachers of the Word of God. Dr. Moffat, upon whom, as leader of the expedition, a two-fold responsibility and anxiety had devolved, now felt that a heavy load was taken from his mind. The mission was to be established. His son was here to live over again his father's life at Kuruman. That life was spent near the Orange river: this was near the Zambese. So, slowly but surely, was the blessed light of the Gospel travelling northwards.

The missionaries next requested that interpreters might be provided who understood Sechwana and Setebele, from whom they could learn the latter language, and through whose aid they might begin to preach to the people. Moselekatse did not show any anxiety for the commencement of such labours, but put off giving interpreters month after month, although he still promised to furnish them. At length, in the end of April, the interpreters were produced, and the missionaries were able to commence preaching to the Matebele. The first services were held in the large cattle-pen of the town, and were attended by great numbers of the soldiers. Moselekatse was always present, and showed at once his knowledge of Sechwana and the doctrines of the Word of God, as previously taught him by Dr. Moffat, by occasionally interrupting the interpreter, and helping him with the right word. As every utterance of Moselekatse is applauded, these corrections were received with the usual demonstrations, every soldier present shouting out "Great King!" &c., in the middle of the sermon. The

chief also considered himself bound once or twice to express his dissent from the doctrines which were proclaimed. For instance, when one of the missionaries, some time after their arrival in the country, was preaching concerning the accessibility of God, he said that all might repair to Him in prayer, the poor people as well as the greatest kings, and that God would hear the one as soon as the other. "That's a lie!" interjected Moselekatse, who did not like to be thus publicly ranked with the poor and abject. The missionary was immediately interrupted by the shouts of applause which greeted the emendation of their chief. As he found, however, that his disapprobation did not alter the preaching, and that in every discourse there was a good deal which was unpleasant for him to hear, the Matebele chief did what people in somewhat similar circumstances do in England and elsewhere—he gave up attending the public worship. His outward friendliness to the missionaries, however, suffered no abatement.

In less than a year after their arrival in the country, the missionaries obtained permission to preach at other towns and villages as well as at Inyate, and they began to visit regularly the three which were nearest them. Mr. Thomas, who obtained this liberty for himself and his fellow-labourers, was now able to speak to the people in their own language. Being a very good shot, it was easy for him, at almost every preaching visit, to kill a gnu or a zebra in the open country between Inyate and the scene of his evangelistic labours. The whole or the greater part of the meat he usually gave to the people. Mr. Thomas's fellow-labourers, although not so successful Nimrods, were still able to supply the people occasionally with meat, which cost them nothing but a bullet and perhaps an hour's additional walking. It is not at all to be wondered at if the Matebele sometimes followed the missionaries, not on account of their preaching, but because they ate of the game which they killed for them. A Greater than the missionaries had been followed for similar reasons. The Matebele were all the more inclined to give heed to the preaching after they had seen the prowess of the preachers in the field, as well as their kindliness of heart.

After a little time it was arranged that missionaries and white men generally were to rank in the country as the "sons of Moselekatse." White men were allowed to approach the person of the chief, and usually sat down beside him. His officers in attendance sat next; his own children at a still further distance, but within a few yards. At the door of the enclosure, if the place was small, or at

some thirty yards' distance, if in a large yard, sat the common soldiers in a semi-circle. Each person, on entering the enclosure, loudly and repeatedly greeted the chief, and then took his place among those of his own rank. The only women admitted into the chief's presence were two or three of his wives. Their place was behind Moselekatse's chair.

About four o'clock in the afternoon was what may very appropriately be called "feeding-time" at Moselekatse's quarters. The cattle had been killed in the morning, and the beef had been stewing all the day in a pot, the lid of which was kept closely sealed with cow-dung. The meat was very tender, and having been stewed rather than boiled, retained its richness. The cook having announced to the

chief that dinner was ready, received of him minute orders how to dispose of it. First of all, a certain portion was brought to Moselekatse himself, in a dish which had been just before handed to the cook by one of the wives. This wooden vessel, in which the chief always ate his meal, was never washed, and never removed from his immediate

AFTER A LYNX.

neighbourhood. These precautions were taken on account of the prevailing fear of witchcraft. The congealed fat at the bottom of the dish was at least an inch in thickness. On its sides the "deposit" was not so thick, and the colour and contour were more variegated from having been frequently disturbed by the presence of fresh pieces of beef.

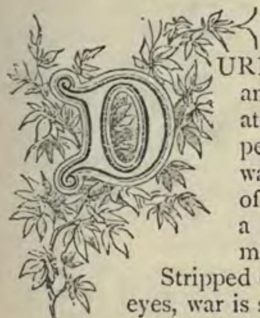
White men who visited Moselekatse at this auspicious hour were always invited to dine; and it would have been altogether unaccountable had any one refused. A portion was ordered for his visitors in a separate dish, and what they did not eat they were expected to send to their waggons. Nothing was to be returned. If the chief wished specially to honour a visitor, he would ask him to eat out of the royal dish. Occasionally I have seen a missionary advanced to a position even more dignified, and asked to cut down the meat for Moselekatse. When he felt inclined to present any of his visitors with the remains of the piece of which he had been partaking, it was carefully removed from the "unwashed" to another dish, and in that carried to the waggon.

While the visitors were eating, the cook and his assistants handed round the immense dishes of beef to the various companies of soldiers present, according to the orders of the chief. Each company shouted out their thanks when the dish was placed before them. Not only was the use of a chair sacred to Moselekatse, but so was the knife in eating. No one may use a knife at meals except the chief, the white men, and the chief's family. But the Matebele are at no loss without knives; although, I confess, their appearance when thus engaged in eating beef is singularly repulsive, and suggestive of great degradation. The soldier who is next to the dish seizes one of the large pieces of beef into which the oxen have been cut. I believe Moselekatse's beef was always cut up in one way, and every piece had its name. Laying hold of the beef with both his hands, the soldier seizes it with his teeth, and pulls off as much as he can from the piece. What comes off is his. Passing the large piece to the man next him, he sets to work to masticate and swallow the bit which he has secured. By the time he is quite ready for another bite, the piece of beef has travelled from man to man, becoming, of course, less in bulk on its journey; and is again presented to him who first attacked it. And so it goes round until it is demolished. But if it is very large, and the party are not numerous, they may be seen seated in a circle, supporting the meat by their hands in the

centre, while they all simultaneously tear and pull awa at it with their teeth in vigorous style. Not a word i spoken; each one conducts himself as if he had no time t lose. And certainly what one man does not seize is soo swallowed by the man next him. In no circumstances ar good teeth of such evident and immense advantage; th old and toothless man can have no chance at such dinner-party. After the beef has been disposed of, larg calabashes of beer are brought in, and placed where th dishes of meat had stood. Each man in his turn raise the vessel to his mouth, and takes a long draught. Th old have now the advantage, being experienced beer drinkers, and make up for any deficiency in their share o the beef.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MATEBELE AND THE GOSPEL.



URING the five months which I spent among the Matebele, I gave some attention to their customs and to the peculiarities of their social life as a warlike people—every able-bodied man of whom is a soldier, and every year a year of war. No more complete military despotism ever existed. Stripped of all its attractiveness to European eyes, war is seen in its unmitigated horrors when carried on by Zulus and Matebele every year and as a matter of course. Such a society needs a head—one guiding mind. No council or oligarchy suits the purely military organisation; without one man able to wield it such a tribe falls to pieces; with a man who can conceive and execute, encourage and compel, the weapon in his hands is a terrible one—stripping a country of its population as the reaper cuts down the corn in the harvest-field.

Matebele society may be said to exist for the chief. His claims are supreme and unquestioned. To him belongs every person and everything in the country. The droves of cattle which you meet in every part of the country belong to the chief; and if one dies he is informed of it. The herd-boy who follows the cattle, and his master who lives in the adjoining town, belong alike to the chief. The

troop of girls who rush out from every Matebele town
see the passing waggons, belong all of them to the chi
the immensely fat women who slowly follow are int
duced to the traveller as the wives of Moselekatse. T
chief's officers or headmen may indeed possess priva
property; but the chief has only to raise his finger, a
their goods are confiscated and they themselves put
death.

The headmen lead perhaps the most wretched liv
under this wretched government. The private soldier h
little in possession or enjoyment, but he has also lit
care. The officer, on the other hand, knows that jealo
eyes are upon him. His equals in rank and station cov
his possessions, and regard the favours which he receiv
from the chief as so much personal loss to themselv
Therefore the headmen are continually plotting a
counter-plotting against one another. "We never know
whispered one of them to me, having first looked ca
fully round to see if we were quite alone, "we never kn
when we enter our house at night if we shall again lo
upon the light of the sun." As a matter of fact such m
seldom fall asleep sober; they every night call in the a
of "boyalwa" (beer) to deepen their slumbers.

One day a small wiry man was introduced to me
Inyate by one of the missionaries. He was asked where
had been the night before, and with a smile mentioned t
name of a certain village. This person had sharp restle
eyes, the thinnest lips I had seen among natives; his mou
was wide, and his teeth large and white. I was told aft
he left that he was one of the chief's executioners; a
from the frequency of his domiciliary visits, he was call
by the Matebele "the chief's knife." I thought his fa
befitted his office. Waiting in the neighbourhood till h
victim has drunk the last cup of beer, he gives him tin
to fall into that stupor of sleep and drunkenness out
which he is never to awake. The chief's knife has h
assistants, who are in readiness to "mak' siccar" a
bloody work; for Moselekatse could not carry on h
paternal administration with only one "knife." Accor
ing to the testimony of one of the missionaries, it w

nothing for him to send in one night four or five different parties of vengeance, to hurry the inhabitants of four or five different villages into eternity.

The law of Moselekatse, like that of Tshaka, from whom he broke away, forbade his soldiers to marry, so that the increase of the Matebele depended greatly on their success in taking children in war. I found therefore that this strange people (they can hardly with propriety be termed a tribe) consisted of a few Zulus, who had been the life-long companions of Moselekatse, and who, under him, exercised authority over some ten or twelve thousand soldiers, who were a heterogeneous assemblage of members of every tribe through which Moselekatse had forced his way north. These Zulus were all advanced in years. The middle-aged and full-grown men were Bechwanas, being the captives taken when the Matebele resided in the Transvaal. Lastly, the young men were Makalaka and Mashona, the captives whom they had seized since they came into the country which they now inhabit.

The captives grow up in the service of their captors, or of those to whom they sell them within the tribe. They herd cattle in time of peace; they carry the impedimenta of the soldier when he goes to war. At home they practise fighting and running with boys of their own age; in the field they are familiarised with deeds of blood. Their physical frame thus becomes more fully developed than if they had grown up in their own unwarlike and ill-fed tribes. I have seen children of Bushmen among the Matebele whose personal appearance formed a perfect contrast to their ill-favoured relatives in the desert. As the captive boys grow older, they become impatient of the restraints of their position, and laying their heads together, all living in a certain town march off in a body to the chief's quarters and present their petition to Moselekatse: "We are men, O King; we are no longer boys; give us cattle to herd and to defend." If the chief approves of their petition, he drives out a few cows as their herd, and gives these boys into the charge of an experienced soldier, with some assistants, who, in the new town or barracks which they erect, proceed to train them as Mate-

bele soldiers. This is called to "bota." It is in this wa
that the Matebele army is supplied with men.

The new military town or regiment is called by th
same name as the one in which they lived as captive boy
When they go to war now it is as a company of that reg
ment. But they are no longer baggage-carriers : they bea
their own weapons now like their former masters. Shoul
they succeed in killing and in taking captive, they at onc
occupy the position of their former owners, and on a secon
war have their boy to carry their food and water. Shoul
they not succeed in killing a man, woman, or little child, the
position is still one of dishonour. They are not men.
at the camp fire they sit in the presence of comrades whos
spears have drunk blood, the latter will sometimes sho
contempt for them by rubbing their portion of meat in th
sand, and then throwing it to them as to a dog. The
is therefore every possible inducement to animate th
youth to shed blood speedily. On their return journe
from a successful raid, the captives are during the nigh
tied to their captors or to trees, to prevent their escap
Should a captive fail on the march after his master
tired urging him forward, he stabs him and leaves his boc
on the path.

The Zulus are careful to keep up their own custom
among themselves ; but I did not learn that they inculcate
them among their Makalaka and Mashona vassals. Lik
other conquerors, Moselekatse himself paid a certain defe
ence to the religions of the countries which he conquere
For instance, he sent to "inquire" on certain occasions
the "Morimo" (god) of the Makalaka. When I was in th
country, about a dozen Malokwana priests or doctors fro
the south-east of the Matebele country were busily engage
in making rain at the chief's camp. They were in th
employment of Moselekatse, and would be handsome
paid for their services. But then these religious acts we
public and official, and supposed to be proper to Moselekat
as chief. All such questions were far removed from th
common soldier's thoughts, which were debased in th
extreme.

My own impression of the Matebele soldiers was, that th

mental and spiritual parts of their nature had become very much dwarfed by disuse; and that they were very seldom indeed occupied with thoughts about the Unseen in their every-day life. Their whole training as youths, their incentives in the prime of life, their aims and their objects at home and in the field, were very brutal and degraded. If

MODE OF HUNTING AMONG THE MASARWAS.

the missionaries approached the youths with the words ot Jesus Christ, they found them the most impracticable and unruly class in the country, having their minds eagerly set on the attainment of their full manhood through the shedding of human blood. If they spoke to the men who had gained this distinction, and were glorying in their strength, every word which as evangelists they uttered, tended, accord-

ing to Matebele ideas, to unman them—to neutralise th
deeds of which they were vaunting, The men wear a nec
lace of wood, every link of which represents an enemy sla
in battle. In the war-dance they step out and give on
proud thrust of the assegai for every enemy they hav
killed. Christianity would rob them of their necklace, an
deprive them of their public boasting. If the missionari
approached the old men, who, alas! were not numerous
such a land, they found in every case that the man's natur
blunted by the deeds of his manhood, was now still furth
debased by habitual drunkenness and excess. And if suc
were the men, what, in the light of the religion of Jesu
Christ, were the women of the Matebele, who were not th
equals but the creatures of such men? We leave the
condition undescribed.

The bloodthirstiness of the Matebele decreased aft
their contact with missionaries. The latter repeatedly to
the soldiers of Moselekatse that it was a disgrace to kill o
people and women and children in war, and that Englis
soldiers fight only with those who are armed. I never sa
greater "shame and confusion of face" in a black ma
than in the case of a party of soldiers at Inyate, befo
whom I was imitating the retreating form of a decrepit o
man hobbling away into the bushes, and the aged woma
appealing to their mercy, while they followed, and speare
all indiscriminately. Had they been white men the blus
on their faces would have been deep. In black me
this expression is chiefly to be detected about the ey
and mouth.

On one occasion, while we were on a visit to his quarter
Moselekatse called Mr. Sykes to his waggon to converse wit
him. He wished the missionary to give up residing
Inyate, and to come and live with him. "I am always gla
when you missionaries are near to me," said the aged chie
"My heart is white when I see you. When I have you
my encampment I say to myself, God is with me." Di
trusting his own men, the chief knew he could always tru
the missionary. "We always take notice," the officers
the chief remarked on another occasion, "that the chi
does not kill so many people when you white men are at h

camp. He loves the white men, and he knows they don't like bloodshed."

After more than twenty years of waiting, the missionaries in this trying field were at length, in 1882, cheered by the coming forward of one and another of the Matebele, who openly professed their faith in Christ and were baptised. Two missionaries have watched through this long weary night in Matebeleland, and now rejoice in the approaching dawn. The Rev. W. Sykes of Inyate, and the Rev. T. M. Thomas, who resided first at Inyate, and latterly at Shiloh, where he has been for some time labouring unconnected with the Missionary Society, and where he has had the privilege of baptising the first Matebele convert to Christianity. Lopengole, the son of Moselekatse, whose government has been carried on very much on the same lines as that of his father, Moselekatse, instead of putting these open professors of Christianity to death, as the Matebele long feared would be the case, has spoken encouragingly to them, and urged them to steadfastness and industry in acquiring knowledge. We cannot, however, put much trust in the words of Lopengole; for it is not long since another convert or inquirer was put to death by the chief, and that after the missionary had gone expressly to plead for his life. As usual, the crime laid to this man's charge was that of witchcraft—the real reason, his becoming a Christian. No mission more peculiarly needs the prayers of the churches than that to the Matebele.

During my stay in his country, Moselekatse agreed to allow me to form a new station on the same terms that my friends enjoyed at Inyate. But when I considered the facilities for instruction afforded by the milder government of the Bechwana chiefs, as contrasted with the unyielding sway of Moselekatse, I resolved in the meantime to return to Shoshong, and submit the offer of Moselekatse and the circumstances of the Matebele mission to the consideration of the Directors in London. That mission was now happily through the crisis on account of which I had joined it; and I did not conceive it to be right for me to relinquish the direct and active work of instruction elsewhere for such a position as my friends occupied among the Matebele.

When I had made up my mind, I rode over to Moselekatse's quarters to thank him for the offer of a site for a station which he had given; but said that I should first return to Shoshong, where my "bagolu" (fathers, directors) had placed me; and if they agreed to my returning I should

A BAMANGWATO BOY.

come back. This elicited the commendations of the chief: "This is how the white men prevail, by the obedience which they render to superiors." Turning to me, he asked, "Will you come back in the winter?" I replied that I did not think so; indeed, it was uncertain whether I should come back at all. This answer also met with approval:

"Makense is no deceiver; other white men speak pleasantly and tell me they will be back soon, but never return."

When I last saw Moselekatse, he was very ill, unable to lift the cup to his own lips. He begged hard for medicine. But it would have been a hazardous thing for "Sekhome's missionary" to have dosed Moselekatse just before leaving the country. Any temporary discomfort produced by the medicine would have roused the suspicions of those who never cease speaking of witchcraft and poisoning. Besides, the old man's disease was practically incurable; and my answer to him was that "I had no medicine which would make him better."

"Would you tell that to your own father, if he were in my position to-day?" pleaded the aged chief.

I was heartily sorry for him; and was glad to be able to say that his own missionaries would be ready to assist him in this way, as they had done before. To show the respect entertained by the chief for missionaries, and something akin to the dignity attaching to his own character, I may mention that, as we entered the yard previous to my final interview, we were informed by an attendant that "we must not be offended, the chief's heart was white towards us; but there would be no shaking of hands in greeting that day." We soon saw the reason: the chief had not power to move his arms from where they lay.

When I was leaving the country, my waggons stuck fast in a deep rut opposite one of the towns. Some scores of soldiers came out to witness the efforts of the oxen to pull the waggon out.

"Go back to Inyate and live there," said the men. "Don't you see that the waggon refuses to go again to Sekhome?"

I had now an opportunity of witnessing the united strength of these men in pulling a waggon. I begged their assistance from their officer, who was present; but the men consented to pull the waggon out only on condition that I would unyoke my oxen, and leave it entirely in their hands. As soon as I had done this they raised a chorus; and during the singing of the first line or two they were all making preparations, and securing a good hold of the

waggon. When they reached a certain word in the song every energy was put forth by common consent, and the waggon was at once in motion. "Tusa! tusa!" (help) was now the cry. Not being able to pay nearly a hundred men, I persuaded the officer to take the payment, and give it to his soldiers. I first gave some bullets; these were scattered in the crowd of men, who growled and roared as they pressed on one another in the scramble. The officer now said that I must give a bit of calico also.

"But," I said, "I have not enough to go over them all."

"Never mind; hand what you wish to give to me."

I gave the man two or three yards of thin print, which, gathering into a lump in his hand, he threw among the men. There was now another scramble, and in a few minutes I beheld one man with a shred of cloth encircling his brow, another had enough to tie round his neck, a third stuck a portion as an ornament into the large slit in his ear! Every one was now pleased; so I again yoked my oxen and proceeded on my way.

Our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Sykes, accompanied us as far as the borders of Moselekatse's country. In that distant mission-field such a journey in the waggon is appreciated as a "change" in the life of the missionary. Families usually return to their station with recruited health and vigour after a week or fortnight's tour, during which missionary work has been done in villages and by the wayside.

Late one Saturday we reached the Shashane river, in the Makalaka country. We were benighted before the last waggon was pulled through the sandy bed of the river, both men and oxen being exhausted after a long day's ride. To complete our discomfort, it commenced to rain while we were still working in the drift, arranging twenty or thirty weary oxen before one waggon. Instead of a cheerful camp with a bright fire, our waggons were standing under some spreading acacias in complete darkness—a small fire struggling with the rain being completely surrounded by some Matebele soldiers who were then with us. Instead of a comfortable pen for our cattle near to the waggons, there was no pen at all, and the cattle were lying about on all sides. There was, however, a cheerful light inside my

waggon, and a bright face too, and a warm cup of coffee ready to refresh me after my day's work. But there is many a slip between the cup and the lip. Before I had tasted it I heard first the howl of the hyena, and then the low growl of the lion. There was no mistaking either, so I had at once to see to the safety of the camp. We were certainly in a nice predicament—without a cattle-pen—without a fire—without even firewood! Between the darkness of the night and the shadow of the trees I could see nothing whatever outside.

Having a good glass lantern, I succeeded in inducing some of the men to accompany me to collect firewood, and to light new fires, so as to encircle our camp. Mr. Sykes did the same at another side with the aid of his men. What was the lion doing all the while? He never had a better chance of getting beef, but his courage failed him. My dog Nero, which had been in a decidedly pugnacious humour that evening, having had a long and severe fight with another dog, as soon as he heard the lion and hyena went out to meet them, and barked loudly between them and the cattle. When our fires were ready, we collected the cattle, and brought them inside our enclosure. I may explain that the lion had approached on the leeward side; therefore, while the oxen were uneasy at the sound of his first and only low growl, they were not so terrified and unmanageable as they might have become had our enemy approached us from the windward, so as to enable them to get his scent. Aware of this, the lion endeavoured once or twice to get past the dog, and round the circle of fires to the other side. He succeeded twice, but was on both occasions followed in the darkness by our noble defender.

But do I mean to affirm that a dog ventured to attack a lion? The dog, of course, could not have gone near to the lion, for a single stroke of his paw would have killed it at once. At one time it must have ventured too close, for it suddenly gave a scream of terror, and then its bark was silent. I thought it was all over with my faithful dog. But after a rush through the bushes, which I could distinctly hear, his loud deep bark was heard in a different quarter. The lion must have made a spring at the dog, and just

missing him, run for the other side of the oxen; when, nothing daunted by his narrow escape, the dog stuck to his place between the lion and his master's property.

But why did not the li rush past him at once, entirely ignoring his existence and his barking? The dog no doubt would have given way. Now, I don't know why the lion was not bolder than he showed himself to be. All I know is, Nero never let him get past him toward the cattle. I conjecture that the lion was prevented from making a spring, not on account of the dog's presence, but on account of his barking.

If all thieves had bells tied to them which they could not keep from ringing, or even if loud-barking dogs always accompanied them, and baited them, they might not fear the dogs much, and the bells not at all, but they would consider it very awkward to ply their stealthy work in such unfavourable circumstances. And so the lion cared nothing for the dog as an opponent; but how was he to know how many invisible enemies were roused by so much noise? Go where he liked, the barking went with him.

When this had gone on for some hours, I felt at a loss to know what to think of it, and hazarded the opinion that it was only a wolf or hyena, and no lion at all. On my saying this to old Mebalwe, he demanded if I had ever heard a wolf make such a noise as that growl? "That did not come from a wolf's throat," said the old native traveller. "But did you ever hear of a lion kept at bay by a dog, while men are gathering wood and making fires, and collecting their cattle?" I replied. Mebalwe admitted that this was something new to him, but stuck to his firm belief that it was a lion.

The conduct of the oxen did not throw much light on the question, for when the dog and his invisible opponent rushed to the windward, although they raised their ears and looked excited, they were quieted by the whistling of the men and the sight of the fires all round them. About an hour or two before dawn, the barking ceased, the oxen lay down, and our danger was evidently at an end. As soon as Mebalwe could see a spoor, he examined those round the encampment, and especially in the sand of the river near

my waggon, where they were plainly visible. There was no longer any doubt: it was a large lion which had been kept at bay by one dog in a pitch-dark night.

We had now the choice of spending the Sunday in

NATIVE CHARMS AND HEAD-DRESS.

building a cattle-pen, and preparing ourselves for another night's attack, or of proceeding on our journey to the village of Monyame, which was within a short distance of our camp. We chose the latter course, as involving less labour, with the certainty of repose for ourselves and our cattle,

and for Nero, our faithful defender. A few days after, Nero fell sick, and could not cross a deep rapid river through which the waggons had gone. I went back for him myself, carried him over in my arms, and prepared a place for him in the second waggon. In a few days, however, he died, much to my own and my children's regret. We dug a grave for him by the roadside, and raised a heap of stones over it. I am sure any boy who reads about Nero's exploits will agree that he deserved this honour, for he was no common dog.

We reached Shoshong in the end of February. Khame and Khamane, and other attendants at church and school rode out to meet us, and expressed their joy at our return.

CHAPTER XVIII

MISSION WORK AT SHOSHONG.

AFTER my return from Matebeleland, in February, 1864, I resumed my labours as a missionary at Shoshong. During our absence our dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Price, had been earnestly and assiduously carrying on the work of instruction. It was amicably arranged that, in accordance with the expressed wishes of the chief and people, the station should be occupied by the London Missionary Society. The German missionaries carried on their work in districts within the Transvaal Republic, and on its border.

The Bechwanas are ancestor-worshippers. Their highest and, as they think, most efficacious act of worship and prayer, is to sacrifice a sheep at the grave of a deceased ancestor, whose help is invoked by prayer. The helplessness of heathenism comes out in the manner in which this service is conducted. Not only is he called by name at whose grave the assembled people stand, but his father is named, and his grandfather, and all the known ancestors of the tribe; and then the priest exclaims—"And you, our ancestors, whose names have not come down to us, be not offended if we call you not by name, but help us, all of you, in our present trouble."

Here we have worshippers, believers in the value of

sacrifice, and believers in the immortality of the soul of man. These and other beliefs are welcome "pegs" to the missionary, on which he hangs his statements and appeals. The missionary finds that it is not that the people cannot comprehend what is preached to them, but that they prefer the customs in which they have been brought up. Just as there are thousands of professing Christians in England who could give no better reason for their religious belief than that it was the belief of their fathers, so Bechwanas look upon their customs with reverence for the same reason —it was the religion of their ancestors.

"How should I answer to Khari if I changed the customs of the town?" said Sekhome to me on one occasion when we were conversing on this subject.

My argument was, "How are you to know that Khari would not have changed the customs himself, if the Word of God had come in his time? You say you will live and die like your ancestors. As a matter of fact you are not doing it. You have changed your weapons of war; you ride on horses, and shoot with guns. Your customs, which you say are inviolable, you have already broken. Indeed, it is impossible for you to live and die like your ancestors. You can never be like Khari; for he never refused the Word of God, whereas you do refuse it at present. From all you tell me of Khari, I form the opinion that he would have probably believed the Word of God himself if it had ever been made known to him. You must therefore live your own life, in the circumstances in which God has placed you, and not seek to live the life of an ancestor to whom these circumstances were unknown."

In the course of the year 1864 we were able to begin two district schools, as well as to carry on the more advanced classes which had been for some time under instruction. Mr. Price took the towns lying in the centre of the mountain range, meeting in the courtyard of the Maownatlala. He was assisted by Khamane, the second son of Sekhome, and two or three others. My district was to the west, at the town of the Mapaleng. I was accompanied by Khame, the eldest son of Sekhome, and by Mogomotsi, his uncle. These native assistants were of

service in introducing us to the people, and also in the practical work of teaching. The chief of the Mapaleng made a long speech when we requested permission to teach the children in his town, to the effect that "he himself was too old to learn; he was content with the path in which his father had placed him; but as for the young people, they might all be taught. Whoever wished to learn himself, or to have his children instructed, need not be afraid; they were doing no harm; the learning was good." We opened this school with some thirty scholars, and were encouraged by the progress which many of the children made. We found also that the work of instructing others was beneficial to our more advanced pupils.

In conducting school among the Bamangwato, I observed a great difference in the capacities of the various learners. Some were easily taught, being able to understand your meaning at once; others were slow and dull, and it was as if a mist were before their mental vision. These last were chiefly grown-up people. I came to the conclusion that the mental ability of those I was teaching was probably as great as in a village school in a country district in England. Since I came to England I have met with the following remarks from gentlemen better able to judge than myself, having had different races in one school. The Rev. Henry Calderwood, whose labours, both as missionary and as Civil Commissioner on the Kaffir frontier, were of great advantage both to the natives and to his own countrymen, gives the following opinion on the subject:—

"I have often observed with much interest the progress which children of both sexes have made at school; and in equal circumstances the Kaffir or Fingo boy is quite a match for a respectable youth of European origin in the acquisition of knowledge whether classical or mechanical, notwithstanding the Saxon superiority in energy of character."*

The Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Bombay, kindly furnished me with the following statement as to the comparative intellectual endowments of Africans and Asiatics:—

"Though I am a missionary to India, I have had much

* "Caffres and Caffre Missions," p. 34.

to do with natives of the shores and inner countries of Eastern Africa, from Abyssinia, south to Zengebar; and I must say, that after my experiences in attempts to instruct and educate them in our Bombay mission, I have been led to form a very favourable opinion of their talents and aptitude to learn. In these respects I do not think them inferior to the average specimens of the Hindus. I have seen individuals of them at the top of some of our largest classes. I have not observed in them, when properly attended to, anything of the fickleness, caprice, and idleness often laid to the charge of the negro races; while I have felt myself, bound to respect their common sense, straightforwardness, fidelity, and strength of affection. The people of Africa, when Christianised and civilised, will be found to occupy a respectable position in the scale of humanity."

Dr. Livingstone also, speaking of the Bakwena, says:—"They might be called stupid in matters which had not come within the sphere of their observation; but in other things they showed more intelligence than is to be met with in our own uneducated peasantry."*

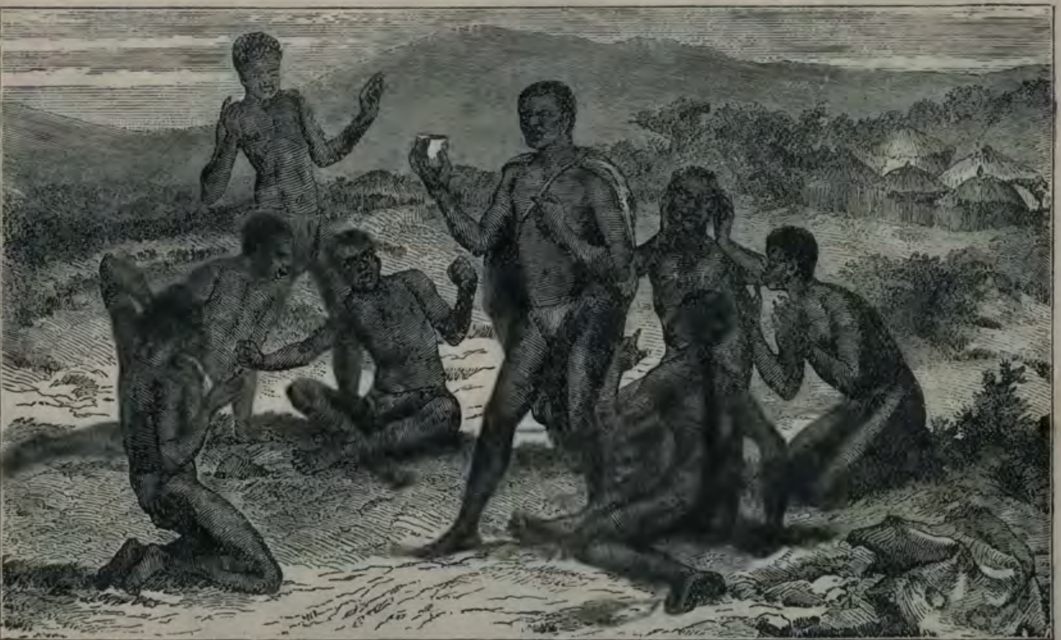
In all matters pertaining to the habits of animals, the plants and trees of the country, the political history of the various tribes, the casuistic difficulties as to relationship and property arising out of polygamy—in these and many such questions they are quite at home. Bechwanas have remarkably retentive memories, owing no doubt to the fact that, having no written language, all their knowledge on every subject must be either treasured in the memory or lost. Having broken up into many separate tribes, each one strong enough to stand alone and assert its independence, these South African clans were never without their feuds and raids. And the chief reason for Highland raids was also the moving cause of South African forays—the possession of cattle; with occasionally a quarrel on the interesting subject of the marriage or the marriage-portion of some young scion of a chieftain's family.

But while Bechwanas sometimes fight with their spears, they decidedly prefer to do so with their tongues, and are in-

* "Missionary Travels," p. 19.

deed much better qualified for the latter warfare than for the former. And so diplomacy played a prominent part in the public business in each little court, without letters and without a secret cypher. Each chief had usually three or four confidential officials whom he employed on these public and sometimes delicate errands. It was the custom to send one of these ambassadors with four or five men as an escort. Before starting the party is assembled to hear the message of their chief. The leader of the expedition then repeats it; and should he hesitate, one of his men helps him with the word or thought. They now start on a journey of six or ten or more days, going over the message once or twice at their evening fire, and especially reviving it in their minds the night before their arrival at their destination. Next morning they proceed into the public courtyard, and salute the chief in the name of their master, reciting some items of news which they deem suitable for the ears of the public. Then they retire with the chief into the private court of the latter, ostensibly for the purpose of drinking beer, but in reality to deliver their message. At other times the message will be delivered at once in the public yard. The leader of the messengers is the speaker. He proceeds without any break in his story till he comes to the "gist" of the whole matter, the refusing or granting, as the case may be; he then pauses, and, turning to his attendants demands, "Am I lying? does not our chief say so?" "You speak the true words of our master," say all the attendants. And thus, without writing, the message is faithfully delivered; without attesting signatures to a document, the testimony of four or five men is presented to the chief, to declare that such is the opinion and determination of his neighbour. Missionaries in Bechwanaland find that many of those who listen to their discourses are able again to repeat what they hear—at any rate to give all the ideas.

In summer the houses of the natives, and the hedges round them, are covered over with climbing gourds or calabash plants. Maize, sugar-cane, and pumpkins also grow in every available corner round the houses. When viewed from the adjoining mountain, the town thus clothed



SEKHOME AND HIS COUNCIL.

in green is really beautiful. But however charming in the distance, it is not at all pleasant to thread those narrow, winding, and gourd-shaded lanes. When daily returning from school soon after noon, I found the atmosphere of the town to be quite oppressive, and constantly wondered that cases of fever were not even more numerous. Early in 1865 I had an attack of African fever, no doubt induced by constant exposure to this miasma. I had recourse to strong measures, dosing myself at once with Livingstone's prescription, and was only a few days an invalid.

In the end of 1864 our peaceful labours were disturbed by an inroad from an unexpected quarter. A war-party of Bakwena, headed by Khosilintsi, brother of Sechele, and by Sebele, the eldest son of that chief, were reported as approaching Shoshong from the south. Some preparations were made by Sekhome, but in a very different spirit from what was shown when he anticipated an invasion of Matebele. Not a woman left the town; they said they had nothing to fear from Bakwena; it was only Matebele who killed women and children. The Bakwena were allowed to return home unmolested, with a few cattle which they managed to collect without fighting. Sechele had made the raid professedly to indemnify himself for losses and insults inflicted on him and his people by Sekhome, especially by the party of "baloi," or wizards, whom Sekhome had sent to wither up the cornfields of the Bakwena. It was evidently not Sekhome's interest to have a quarrel with the Bakwena at this time, while expecting another visit from the soldiers of Moselekatse.

About this time I had frequent visits from Sekhome. On these occasions he had no attendant. Rising from the public yard after dusk, he withdrew first to his mother's premises, and then by a private gateway found his way to my house. During his interviews the subject of Christianity was sometimes brought before his notice; and I found that this man with the sinister face, who was the greatest sorcerer in Bechwanaland, who was hated by many and mistrusted by all his neighbours, had a keen appreciation of the character and the object of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He referred more than once to an Englishman, not a missionary,

who had long before taken pains to explain to him the doctrines of God's Word. He had often heard preaching since, but Sekhome's mind continued to be most impressed with the view of our religion which he had first heard as a novelty from his early instructor. I could never find out who this traveller was who explained Christianity to the Bechwana chief. Sekhome never failed to mention that he was not a missionary. There would seem to be the same feeling among the Bechwanas as amongst Englishmen, that preaching is to be expected from a minister, as it is his proper work. Hence the store set on the kindly explanations or good counsel tendered by a passing layman. Sekhome, indeed, had not forgotten this person's name, but it was not recognisable to me as he pronounced it. But it is likely that his story of the Gospel will still remain in this chief's mind as long as he lives. Would to God there were many travellers and hunters of this kind!

"It is all very good for you white men to follow the Word of God," Sekhome more than once said. "God made you with straight hearts like this"—holding out his finger straight; "but it is a very different thing with us black people. God made us with a crooked heart like this"—holding out his bent finger. "Now, suppose a black man tells a story, he goes round and round, so"—drawing a number of circles on the floor; "but when you open your mouth your tale proceeds like a straight line, so"—drawing a vigorous stroke through all the circles he had previously made. "No, do not oppose me; I know I am right. Your heart is white from your birth; the hearts of all black people are black and bad."

"Nay, Sekhome, you are completely wrong. We have all bad hearts. There may be worse thoughts in some than in others; there are bad thoughts in all. Those who turn to God, and often think of Him and of His words, get a new heart and better thoughts."

"Not black people," he interrupted; "and yet"—after a pause—"and yet, after all, Khame's heart is perhaps right. Yes"—after another pause—"Khame's heart is right."

I was glad that he had this opinion of his eldest son. I now reminded him that all white people were not alike—

that he himself knew the difference between them was often very great. "There is F—— now," I said, mentioning the name of a young lad of English parentage who had grown up among the natives in Bechwanaland; "what kind of heart has he got? Is his a white or a black man's heart? You know he prefers the company of black people to that of white men, and he can speak Sechwana a great deal better than English. Of what value to him is the colour of his skin? He was brought up as a Bechwana, and you know the people's nickname for him goes to show that they think of him as one of themselves."

"Yes, F—— is one of us," said Sekhome; "I can't deny that."

"Well," I said, "but if he would change to-morrow—give up his associates in the town—open his heart, like Khame, to the teaching of God's Word—learn to read and to write—in a few years no one would think of him as he does now. It would just be as difficult for him to do this as for a black man, but not more so; inasmuch as he has received a black man's bringing up, having gone about in youth a naked herd-boy with Bechwana boys of his own age, and having also acted as the leader of his native master's oxen when travelling with his waggon.—Sekhome, why shouldn't you 'enter the Word of God'?" I added suddenly.

"Monare," said the chief, rising to leave, "you don't know what you say. The Word of God is far from me. When I think of 'entering the Word of God,' I can compare it to nothing except going out to the plain and meeting single-handed all the forces of the Matebele! That is what it would be for me now to 'enter the Word of God.'"

Poor Sekhome! Such was his own estimate of his position, surrounded by the thralls of priestcraft and polygamy; but, above all, misled by his own darkened and wayward heart!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OLD CUSTOMS AND THE NEW RELIGION.

POLYGAMY is sanctioned by the traditional customs of the Bechwanas. Practically the plurality of wives falls only to the lot of chiefs and headmen. The common freemen of the town have seldom two wives. The headmen have usually from three to six, according to their wealth and social standing. Sekhome had twelve wives. Their houses were in a semi-circular row fronting the court-yard of the town. The chief did not reside with any of his "partners in life," but in his mother's house, which stood in the middle of the row. His personal property was stored in his mother's premises.

It will not be necessary to enter into the domestic arrangements of such a family. But it is necessary to the perspicuity of our narrative to point out that this system not only tends to destroy family affection, but surrounds the chief with never-ceasing complaints and jealousies. A certain provision in servants and cattle is made for each wife by the chief when he takes her home. In return, she furnishes every year a certain quantity of corn for the chief's use. The division of the town out of which each wife comes is always ready to advocate the cause of its representative in the harem, and that of her offspring. The gifts of the chief in cattle or "karosses" or beads to one wife are jealously watched by the others, as are also his presents of horses, or clothing, or guns, to any one of his sons. In early childhood nothing divides the children of the chief; but as they grow up they learn to regard one another as

rivals for the chief's favour. They learn to espouse the side of their mother, and the views of the division of the town to which she belongs. Those whose birth places them in the first rank are the objects of malicious whisperings and half-expressed accusations to the chief. Those who are of inferior birth are accused of plotting, whether guilty or not. But while all this is going on, great outward propriety and etiquette are observed. The jealous wives daily greet each other with smiles, calling one another "mother" with apparent affection. The children vie with one another in outward demonstrations of respect to their father and to all his wives. A stranger might imagine from a single inspection that he never saw such a "happy family;" but this system is nevertheless the fruitful source of most of the internal strifes, often attended by bloodshed, which characterise the ordinary life of a Bechwana community.

The ceremony of "boguera" (circumcision) was administered at Shoshong in April, 1865. Each headman mustered his retainers, and, surrounded by his own sons and near relatives, marched daily to the camp of the neophytes. Proud is the Bechwana father who is surrounded by a number of sons on these occasions. There is an honour connected with this which no distinction of rank can supply. Sekhome's mortification was therefore very great when he found himself marching to the camp alone—not one of his five eldest sons accompanying him. They were all at our school instead, and every Sunday they were in their places at church. They themselves resolved that they would not go to this heathen ceremony.

Here began a period of trouble for our mission. Sekhome, in inviting missionaries to his town, had evidently not anticipated opposition of this kind. He had hoped to be able to regulate all matters connected with the Word of God in his town as he exercised control over everything else. To a certain point it might advance, but no further. So when he found himself deserted by his sons on this public occasion, he was deeply offended, and threatened extreme measures if they did not at once yield obedience to him. Failing to overcome them by threats, he next proceeded to work upon their feelings in private. He is said

to have shed tears in presence of some of his sons, when expostulating with them on their desertion of him and of the old tribal customs. He was successful in winning over two of his sons. But promises and threats were alike unavailing with the other three. Even when he declared he would disinherit them, they continued faithful. After a time

BAMANGWATO GIRLS DRESSED FOR THE "BOYALI."

Sekhome publicly announced that it was his intention to give all his property, and in the end the chieftainship, to those sons who had obeyed him. He at once presented them with valuable articles of European manufacture, such as guns, saddles, clothing, &c. He forbade the Bamangwato to follow the disobedient sons; and told them that

those who had gone to the "boguera" were alone to be regarded as his children. As to the Word of God, it was bad, seeing it led to disobedience on the part of children to their parents; and whoever attended church or school might henceforth look upon Sekhome as his personal enemy.

This opposition had an immediate effect upon the number of those who sought instruction in Christianity; only those came who resolved to brave the wrath of the chief, and occasionally some of their vassals and attendants. On Monday the chief would seek out some one who was perhaps halting between two opinions, and who had been seen attending church on the Sunday. Taking him aside, Sekhome would ply him with threats of vengeance. As he exercised the office of priest as well as chief, he professed to be able and completely determined to blast and ruin the man unless he gave up attending church and school. Knowing also the individual character of most of the people, he was able to attack them at their weak point. One was fond of his flocks and herds: he threatened him with immediate confiscation of his property. Another was peculiarly open to superstitious fears: him he vowed so to bewitch and encompass with the spells of necromancy, that his property would be destroyed, his name blasted, and the affections of even his nearest relatives alienated from him. For more than twelve months the mission made no progress whatever, except, indeed, in the development of character among those who took, perhaps not joyfully, but resignedly, "the spoiling of their goods" for Christ's sake. Those who after all his efforts still continued to attend our services became marked men; and in their steadfastness the Bamangwato, as well as ourselves, understood by a fresh illustration the power of the Gospel of Christ.

It was under such circumstances that I resolved to build a better dwelling-house than the wattle-and-daub hut in which I had hitherto dwelt. I had to begin at the beginning, and make the moulds for the bricks. Brick-making was then proceeded with. I next went to the forest with a party of men, and felled timber, which we conveyed to Shoshong to be dressed there. The stone foundation of

the house was laid by myself, and I had begun with the bricks, laying them down according to a scheme which I found in a book on the mechanical arts, when a bricklayer who had recently begun trading in ivory and feathers arrived at the station. I got several lessons from him on the practical detail of bricklaying, which I did not find in the book; and he was also kind enough to assist me to raise the wall a considerable height before he left. I was equally fortunate in obtaining assistance in the making of doors and window-sashes from English traders who were on the station at the time.

Up to this time Sekhome had shown friendship and respect towards the missionaries. But if the teaching was bad, the teachers could not be good. If he quarrelled with the scholars and with the doctrines taught, he could not remain on friendly terms with their teachers. He had nothing against either Mr. Price or myself. A charge must therefore be concocted. Accordingly he first quarrelled with Mr. Price, and afterwards with me. When I began house-building I had hired four men from Sekhome, who were to obtain payment of a heifer each for a year's service. When this period had half expired, Sekhome demanded their wages. It was evident that he sought occasion against us, and as I could not hope to have a better case at a future time, I resolved to refuse his glaringly unjust demand. I reminded him of our public engagement, and mentioned the names of headmen who were witnesses of the transaction, desiring them to be called to support my statement. I said I was resolved to be his friend, and to fulfil my word in all things. It was for him also to stick to his engagement. But the chief doggedly reiterated his demand, and then left me in a passion, declaring I should know that the anger of Sekhome was not a trifle. In this he was quite right. He succeeded in annoying me very much, especially by removing all our servants, so that we had no one left to assist us belonging to the Bamangwato. They were forbidden to serve us in anything, even to draw water for us from the river. But about this time a young Makalaka lad, who had known me in the Matebele country, came out of his own accord to Shoshong, and placed him-

self in my hands. Then some Englishmen, who were going to hunt in Moselekatse's country, found that they could not take Zulus thither on account of the jealousy existing between Moselekatse and the tribes from which he separated. Two Zulu men were therefore left with me by these sportsmen, so that after a time I was not dependent upon Sekhome's assistance. The opportune manner in which we got help at this crisis in the history of the mission was noticed by both the Christian and the heathen party.

In the course of the strife between Sekhome and the small Christian party in the town, which was headed by his own two eldest sons, every occasion was sought against the believers, but in vain. There was positively nothing of which they could be accused. It was only in this matter pertaining to the service of God in which the chief could find ground of complaint. The bulk of the people were fond of the two young chiefs, and showed their respect and regard in many ways. But the headmen in the town were bitterly set against them, although not for the same reason which animated Sekhome. Khame and Khamane had married sisters, the daughters of Tshukuru, the chief who was next in rank to Sekhome. The ground of the complaint of the headmen was that this Tshukuru was thus raised to pre-eminent rank in the town, inasmuch as the young chiefs, being Christians, would not "add to" the number of their wives, according to heathen custom, so as to elevate several other families to this intimate connection with that of the chief. Hostility to Tshukuru was therefore gradually introduced into the quarrel by Sekhome and his coadjutors, and allowed to mingle with and strengthen the opposition which arose from their hostility to the Word of God. Tshukuru was also joined by several headmen who had secret grounds for fearing or for hating Sekhome—men who had not the slightest attachment to Christianity or appreciation of the position which the young chiefs had taken up. After a time Sekhome secretly offered a reward for the assassination of Tshukuru. He called several Matebele refugees, who were supposed to be more habituated to such ruthless work, and intimated that he wished them to put Tshukuru to death. But the

Matebele knew that Tshukuru was the best shot among the Bamangwato, and a man whose powers with the assegai were known over the country. Besides, they were merely refugees; why should they meddle with the quarrels of the Bamangwato? So, without positively refusing to do what they were commanded, they put off time, professing to be seeking a convenient opportunity to transact this bloody deed.

In January, 1866, Sekhome considered that he was in a position to carry everything before him, and with one blow to crush all opposition. But when the night came on which he intended to kill or to banish his own sons, and all who adhered to them, he found at the last hour that there was a deep unwillingness on the part of the people to move a hand against the young chiefs. He ordered his men to fire. "Upon whom?" "Upon these huts," said the misguided chief, pointing to the houses of his two sons. Not a man would obey. At length Sekhome hastened himself to load a double-barrelled rifle. One of his own headmen came up, and with that amount of compulsion which on certain occasions may be used even toward a chief, laid the rifle aside. Sekhome saw that however much jealousy might be roused against Tshukuru, there was only respect and affection on the part of the body of the people toward his children.

The chief was now in great terror. Judging his sons by himself, he took it for granted that as he was now completely in their hands they would order him to be put to death. So he fled from the midst of followers whom he now distrusted, and hid himself in an outhouse behind his mother's dwelling, while every entrance to his place of retreat was guarded by picked retainers in whom he still had confidence. In the olden time, in a Bechwana town, such a failure as that of Sekhome's would have led to immediate and most disastrous results. The man who had secured in this unmistakable way the suffrages of the people would have asserted his right to reign at once in the town, and his opponent would have been compelled to flee or have been put to death. But Khame and Khamane, the sons of Sekhome, had no such thought. They sent

A SOUTH AFRICAN CATTLE PEN.

their uncle, the brother-in-law of their father, to assure him that he need fear no harm from them. They would not lift a hand against him. But for the satisfaction of the people who had been long troubled with those needless quarrels, they wished him publicly to announce what his future policy was to be as to this marriage question, and if there was to be now peace in the town.

Mogomotsi had the utmost difficulty in obtaining admission to his brother-in-law. Sekhome could not believe that there was no treachery. At length the messenger of his sons stood before him, and delivered to their guilty and trembling father the statement of their forgiveness for the past and their inquiry with reference to the future. Sekhome eagerly answered every question in the way which he knew would give satisfaction—scarcely believing it possible that those upon whom he had shortly before given the order to fire, were addressing him thus respectfully, although he was completely in their power. It was now given out that the strife was at an end; Khame was not to be forced to take Pelutona's daughter to wife, and those who were attending church were not to be molested.

I expressed to the young chiefs my satisfaction on hearing this news, and my hopes that Sekhome would now resume his former manner toward them and toward the mission. I was grieved, however, to find that they had no such hope. They did not believe he was sincere in his public statements. They said his past rule had been characterised by a determination to carry through every project which he began. If he gave up the attempt to put down the Word of God after threatening to do so, it would be the first instance in which he had ever failed in an enterprise to which he had committed himself. Some time after they assured me that their father had returned to his old machinations, and with apparently greater vehemence than ever. They expressed their determination to take no steps whatever to counteract what their father was doing, but to trust in that Providence which had already delivered them.

A short time after the signal failure of Sekhome's plot

KHAME'S MAGIC.

against his sons, I learned from them that their father had secretly despatched a messenger to his brother Macheng, who was then residing at the town of Sechele. Determined not to relinquish the unnatural strife, Sekhome resolved on the bold policy of inviting Macheng back to Shoshong, and of outwardly investing him with the chieftainship. In the event of his own death he maliciously determined that his Christian sons, at any rate, should not enjoy the chieftainship after him. And Sekhome was bold enough to trust that after he had used his brother as a tool, and through him had accomplished all his wishes, he would be able, when he pleased, to rid himself of Macheng also, and resume the rule over the Bamangwato, with no one to dispute his authority, and with no Christianity to hold up its persistent torch-light in his town, and even in his heart, saying of certain actions, "They are wrong, and displeasing to God." In the meantime, however, the town of Shoshong was in daily and nightly ferment. Sekhome and his friends met no longer in open day, but in the darkness of night. But even in these innermost ranks of heathenism there were sure to be some waverers; and Khame and his brother were duly informed of the plans that were being hatched against them.

Khame awoke one night and was alarmed to find his premises lighted up as if on fire. On hastening outside he discovered the "baloi," or wizards, at their enchantments opposite the entrance to his house. They were casting plant after plant, charm after charm, into the fire, mumbling and muttering their dark prayers and curses as an accompaniment. Who would wonder if a shudder passed through the mind of the young man, to find the previously dreaded customs of his ancestors thus actively directed against him, the eldest son of the chief? But the weird appearance of the old wizards, whose faces were lighted up by the flames of their fire, failed to strike terror into the heart of Khame. Advancing unobserved to the hedge of his yard, he suddenly raised himself within a short distance of the "baloi." Surprised in their wickedness, these evil-doers fled panic-stricken from the scene, leaving their spells and charms hissing and crackling in the flames. Fearless of its powers

to harm him, Khame now put out the fire and went again to sleep.

But if the young chiefs were not affected by this necromancy, it was far otherwise with many who sympathised with them personally, and desired to see them enjoying their proper position in the town. These heathen came to inquire if Khame could not return in kind the cursing of his father, and by the employment of other "baloi" counteract the mischief which, they declared, had already come upon him through the perseverance of Sekhome. "Unless you use these things also, the people will be frightened to remain with you. We are not afraid of Sekhome, but who can withstand the power of 'baloi'?"

The young chiefs, however, were impracticable; the Word of God forbade them to curse any one, and especially their own father. And as to the spells themselves, they were worthless observances. The missionaries agreed with Bechwanas that people could be poisoned in their food, but taught that spells had no power over any one; and this was their own opinion and experience also. Had not their father long tried to injure them by such means, and had he not failed? Had they not all health and prosperity in their homes and families?

The heathen men answered that the Word of God no doubt threw its protection over them; but what was to become of those who did not believe "the books" when the necromancy was turned against them? They said that the people loved the young chiefs, but there was one power which would cause them to desert, and that was the power of witchcraft.

No doubt Tshukuru did his best as a sorcerer to counteract all these influences, but he was so unpopular, through the jealousy of the headmen, that little notice was taken of his practice of the "black art." And his efforts were futher neutralised by the open and repeated declarations of his sons-in-law, that they had nothing to do with his spells, and had no confidence in them.

CHAPTER XX.

WAR IN SHOSHONG.

IN February, 1866, our friends Mr. and Mrs. Price left us to visit their relatives at Kuruman. But what we hoped was only a separation for a month or two, turned out to be our severance as colleagues at the same station. There were at that time so few missionaries in Bechwanaland, that it was thought unadvisable that two should reside at one station, even though it had a population of 30,000. The chief, Sechele, was also so urgent for a missionary "who would teach him as Livingstone had done," that it was thought best that Mr. Price should at once take charge of that station. This step entailed additional labour and inconvenience upon Mr. Price, who having built a house at Shoshong, found himself again in a hut at Sechele's. We were sorry that this separation was necessary, and especially regretted its cause—the fewness of missionaries in the country. The loss of our friends' society was much felt by us, and all the more on account of the disturbed circumstances of the mission at the time. At Sechele's, however, they have been able to carry on an extensive work of instruction, and to organise, or perhaps reorganise, the Church, at this old station of Dr. Livingstone. Judgment and firmness were especially necessary in the treatment of Sechele himself. During the time when Mr. Price was rendering important service in connection with the East African Mission, the Bakwena station was in charge of the Rev. Charles Williams, who had been Mr. Price's col-

league. Mr. Williams retired from the work in 1877, which has been resumed by Mr. Price since his return to Bechwana-land. In the educational department he is assisted by Miss Wallace; and the station of Molepolole is at present full of encouragement, and of promise for the future.

On the evening of the 8th of March, Khame was hastily accosted by a Matebele refugee, resident in Shoshong, who in a few words warned him that Sekhome's plans were laid for that very night. The old chief thought his enemies were off their guard. A decisive blow was now to be struck to retrieve the defeat and disgrace of the last attempt. Many of the people had been secured by the most dreadful pledges to be faithful to Sekhome. "I myself," said the Matebele soldier, "have been commissioned to attack you in your house, at the head of a party of my countrymen and others appointed by the chief. My heart is very sore; we Matebele respect chiefs, and obey their commands—we have put this off for a long time, and can do so no longer But my own heart is white toward you—it has no malice; and I therefore sought this opportunity to warn you."

Khame was within five minutes' walk of my house when he received this warning; so he came at once and informed me that if I heard the report of guns during the night neither I nor Ma-Willie was to be alarmed. He was convinced that no one would harm us. I expressed the hope that it would blow over again as before; but I could see that Khame was desponding. He said that his father had filled the minds of the people, and almost maddened himself, with his necromancy; and that those who before spoke boldly on their behalf were now afraid to say a word. I could only invoke God's blessing and protection upon those who sought to serve Him, and who were so hemmed in by heathenism in the ranks of their friends as well as among their enemies.

After leaving me, Khame went to inform his brother and his father-in-law of their danger. Although they anticipated an outbreak at some time, Sekhome had completely taken them by surprise. Not suspecting any danger, Khamane and Tshukuru had gone to the gardens on horse-back, and had not returned when Khame made his appear-

ance at his father-in law's town. When Khame reached his own dwelling, he found that armed men were fast gathering

A SORCERER.

around the entrance. They made way for him, however, and allowed him to take out of his house whatever he wanted; and also to remove his relatives in peace. My last advice to

him was, not to leave his own house, and not to fire a shot. But finding his premises already in the occupation of Sekhome's adherents, he was obliged reluctantly to retreat from his own dwelling. Crossing the river, he took up his quarters outside the town, near to the walls of a building which had been begun by the Hanoverian missionaries, and intended for a church. Neither building nor site was suitable for our operations, and the roofless walls had become a ruin.

Driven by their own father from their home, the young chiefs here took up their head-quarters. Hearing what had taken place, their friends hastened to join them. Some who attempted to do so were forcibly prevented by their relations and friends. Others found that their guns had been hidden by the older members of their families who favoured the views of the chief. The argument used by these old men to their sons was to this effect: "Two parties so opposed to each other as Sekhome and his sons cannot live in one town. We preferred the sons, and we gave them their chance. They might have been chiefs of the town to-day but for their being in the Word of God, which makes them so impracticable. Now, the town cannot be thus disturbed. As the sons refused to take any steps against their father, the people for the sake of peace, as well as through fear of Sekhome's medicines, have many of them gone with the chief this time; and only those who are heedless of death will now join Khame. To-night Sekhome will have the majority on his side, and he will assuredly not imitate the example of Khame by doing nothing—he has already given orders concerning the occupation of his son's premises." With such cautions and remonstrances many young men were deterred from joining Khame. During the night each party sent for its cattle to their posts, and drove them to separate places of security on the mountain range—Khame's cattle climbing the mountain on the east, and Sekhome's on the west of the town.

We spent a very uncomfortable night, revolving if anything not already attempted could be done for the sake of peace. At grey dawn the report of musketry announced that actual fighting had begun. We heard first

a few shots, and then repeated volleys, which resounded from side to side of the "kloof," or gorge. "May God help the right!" was our sincere prayer, as we listened to the firing which began this most unnatural and cruel war. I hastened to the door, and found that one party was stationed opposite the front of my house—another half-way up the mountain to the south of the house. I learnt afterwards that hostilities were commenced by Sekhome's party—the first shot, it was said, having been actually fired by a brother of the young chiefs, called Ralitlari. Khame and Khamane now ascended the mountain behind the ruined building already described, which was that day held by a party of their men under Mogomotsi. Sekhome and his men held the town, occupying Khame's premises and those in the neighbourhood. By stooping down, they could pass along the hedges from one place to another in the town, unseen by those outside. On the other hand, those on the mountain were more conspicuous, although they took every advantage of shelter afforded by the rocks and bushes on its side. Tshukuru and his party occupied a strong position above his own town, and were expending large quantities of ammunition, with little or no result, as we afterwards learned. Kope, the headman of the village on the brow of the mountains, had vacated the houses, and taken up his position among the rocks opposite to my house, and overlooking it. He kept up a pretty constant fire against Tshukuru, who, however, replied with vigour. After taking a survey from the hill at the back of my house, I was satisfied that my premises were being respected by the combatants. I could see Khame's men firing from the mountain-side; and though I could not see those of Sekhome in the town, the smoke from their guns gave frequent evidence of their whereabouts.

As soon as I heard from Khame the previous evening of the imminence of a fresh disturbance, I sent word to some English traders who were then on the station. Two brothers who were then trading in the town found themselves involved in the fray before they were well aware of it. Their waggons stood near the church walls where Khame spent the night. When hostilities commenced, they found

themselves mixed up with Khame's men. A bullet passed through one waggon while one of the brothers was asleep in it. The hut in which part of their goods was kept, and in which the other brother and a friend were sitting, was battered with bullets. Sekhome's men argued that if these Englishmen did not sympathise with the young chiefs, they could have removed their waggons in the night. This was no doubt what the traders would have done if they had known what was to take place. At the same time, every Englishman in the country was sorry for Khame, and convinced of his sincerity and love of peace. His present position was calculated to excite their sympathy. He represented to them that he had been unable to remove all his own ammunition from his premises; his men's guns had been hidden by their relatives; the men had absconded in the night, but were now without arms. He was willing to pay for everything he received. The result of his statement was that the Englishmen helped him to provide suitable equipment for those who had cast in their lot with him. As morning approached Khame gave strict orders to his men to avoid giving the least provocation to their opponents, and that those who loved war must remember that they were entirely unprepared to fight.

It was probably reported to Sekhome in the night by spies that the Englishmen were assisting Khame, and the order had been given to respect neither their lives nor their property. Finding that their hut was untenable, the traders retired for protection behind the walls of the church. It is perhaps not remarkable that young Englishmen, one of them not long from school, should in such circumstances fire upon those who had already damaged their property and seemed to wish to take their lives. They thought indeed that they were unperceived by the other side, and that while having what they called "a lark" they were not compromising themselves or others. In this, however, they were mistaken, for a bend in the town hedge commanded a view of the place where they stood, mixed up with Khame's men under Mogomotsi. It is possible these young men expected to see some brilliant exploits performed by the young chiefs at the head of their men. Instead of this Khame and

Khamane retired to the mountain, and had evidently no intention of making any aggressive movement on the town. The men in the town were content with shots fired at long ranges, and from carefully selected shelter.

After some four hours the excitement of the noisy commencement died away in the minds of the young Englishmen. The whole thing was now pronounced "slow," and they began to bethink themselves of their position as "neutrals" in a Bechwana town. A bullet which almost grazed one of their faces was of considerable weight at this stage of their discussions. It was evident they were in "a mess." How were they to get out of it? The curiosity of the youngest had not been yet fully gratified, so he volunteered to remain in charge of the waggons. The others resolved to make for my house. As soon as they left their shelter they were fired at, but they marched at more than "double-quick" time, and escaped unhurt. They made their appearance at my house about ten o'clock, and gave me an account of their adventure. I was very sorry that they had fired; and their present position, while it provoked a smile, had also its grave aspect. I readily tendered all the protection in my power, although, as I explained to them, I was not at that time aware what my own treatment was to be at the hands of Sekhome.

Two other traders, who were not mixed up with the disturbance in any way, came up to my house and returned to their waggons without accident, although one of them was fired at. My own premises enjoyed perfect immunity. As some of the natives fired rather widely, a few stray bullets were to be expected, considering our proximity to the scene of conflict. One of these was picked up in my cattle-pen. The traders now removed their goods to the neighbourhood of my house. Although those who had broken neutrality were hooted at, they were no longer treated as enemies, but were also allowed to remove their property without much annoyance. In the afternoon my attention was attracted to an old man who, having got within range of the guns, sat for some hours under the shelter of a hedge. I went over to him and offered him food and shelter in my house. But he preferred to go his own way, although so weak and exhausted,

perhaps partly from fear, that he could not rise without help.

The firing was continued on Saturday, but not with the steadiness of the previous day. When Sunday dawned, I had a sad prospect before me. Almost all my congregation were on the mountain, and the town was occupied by those who were opposed to my work as a missionary. At the usual hour for our morning service, I went to the town, and was directed to where Sekhome sat. He was surrounded by thirty or forty "lingaka" (sorcerers) and headmen, all armed. He received me with unusual cheerfulness, calling for chairs to be brought for me and for those who accompanied me. "He has brought his books," said one. "Whom is he to teach to-day?" asked another. There seemed to be considerable curiosity to hear what I should say to Sekhome in such circumstances. The people crowded the place where the chief sat, and others listened outside the hedge. I returned the chief's warm greeting, and then explained that I had come to see him to express my great sorrow for what was taking place in the town. I was not altogether one of his people; but I had so much knowledge of the Bamangwato, and sympathy for them, that I was very sorry to see the town in its present condition.

Sekhome replied, "It was the fault of those on the mountain; his children were disobedient."

I did not hesitate to express my admiration of Khame's conduct, so far as it was known to me; and said there was not another chief in Bechwanaland who had such obedient sons. I could see from the faces of the people that I had their approbation in this remark. This was probably perceived by Sekhome also; for instead of continuing to find fault with them, or with the Word of God, he said that now if he could only compass the death of Tshukuru he would give up the quarrel, and his children might come back. I now intimated my wish to go up to preach to those who were on the mountain. Pointing to my New Testament and hymn-book, I said, "These are my weapons; you need not fear allowing me to go." The chief at once agreed, and the headmen, with more or less readiness, expressed their consent.

The firing had now ceased from the town; and there had been none from the mountain this morning. On ascending the steep mountain-path, I found Khame and Khamane on the summit, surrounded by their followers. All were glad to see me. Every one came to the service except the sentries, who were placed along the brow of the mountain. I explained to them some of the lessons and comforts of Christianity, and encouraged them to seek peace by every means except by forsaking the service of God. I found the young men evincing an admirable spirit, and bitterly regretting the position in which they were placed. "Our days of peace and happiness are over," they said, "for our father will never again believe himself safe in our hands, after driving us from the town." I could see also that there were heterogeneous elements among their followers, some of them being merely on the mountain on account of personal fear of Sekhome, such a commotion being a time for settling all old reckonings of enmity and revenge in a heathen town. After the service I was asked to visit a person of this description, an old sorcerer, who had been formerly a friend and accomplice of the chief. He had been shot through the knee on Friday. He lingered for some days, but afterwards died of the wound. Khame now explained to me that he intended to retire to a stronghold on the mountain at some distance from the town, and that he would engage in no offensive movement against his father. He said that Sekhome had informed Macheng of the position of affairs, and he himself had sent a messenger for the same purpose to Sechele. Khame hoped that one or other of these chiefs would interfere in his behalf. In the meantime he was determined to wait the issue with patience, and trust in God.

For six weeks the town of the Bamangwato was divided and the men were daily under arms. On six Sundays I ascended the mountain fastness, and preached to those who had been driven from the town. I also took charge of property which had been left in the hands of Khame and other combatants by English hunters and traders. Sekhome was agreeable to this arrangement; so I removed from the town native produce and European goods, the

owners of which were absent. I felt convinced that my position as a man of peace was strengthened when I was able to remove valuable goods in presence of both parties, and store them on my own premises. And so with reference to cattle; I received both from Khame and from some of Sekhome's men oxen belonging to Englishmen, which I placed at a post with my own.

At the first convenient opportunity I conducted to Sekhome and his headmen the Englishman who had been seen firing, in order, if possible, to assist him out of his false position. Sekhome received him somewhat curtly; but I could see there was to be no serious difficulty. I began by saying that "this was the man who had taken refuge in my house; if he had done wrong, let those speak whom he had wronged, and let not evil thoughts be hidden in men's hearts." Sekhome sent for a man whose wrist had received some splinters of a bullet which had first struck a neighbouring rock.

"This man," said Sekhome, "has been shot by Moshow (Mr. K——); none of Khame's people had small-shot in their guns; this is blood drawn by an Englishman."

My companion was somewhat uneasy, but protested that he had not fired any small shot. I bethought me of a simple diversion in his favour, and said, "This certainly looks somewhat like small shot; but might it not have been the bits of a bullet which had struck against a rock? Before coming to any decision I would suggest that the chief take a walk up as far as this Englishman's waggons, and he will there find numerous bullet-marks which may guide him in settling the question."

The chief's face lighted up. "Was there much damage done to the waggon?" he asked.

I replied that there was a great deal, but that what interested me was the similarity of the marks on the side of the waggon to those on the man's wrist.

So it was agreed that Moshow's case should stand over till the damage to the waggon was inspected. Next day Sekhome and his headmen appeared, and I pointed out to him the marks I had referred to. The waggons had indeed sustained a good deal of damage, and would always

bear the marks of the bullets. After inspecting them with evident satisfaction, Sekhome of his own accord said that Moshow was acquitted: the wounds on the waggon would atone for the wounds on the man's hand!

On the night of Sunday, the 18th March, I was going the round of my premises before retiring to rest, when to my surprise I stumbled in the darkness on a number of armed men. "Why do you sit there in the dark?" I asked. They said they had been appointed by Sekhome to surround my house for the purpose of waylaying Mogomotsi and Khamane, the uncle and brother of Khame. Sekhome had heard that they were every night in my house. I gave them a message to Sekhome that it was not correct that any of those from the hill had visited my house; but that I was glad that he had sent men, who would now see for themselves. I had this "black watch" every night round my house for several weeks. The circumstances attending its withdrawal were somewhat amusing. I usually came upon some of them every night, in snug corners, where they were frequently sound asleep. I roused a party of them one night, and warned them that if I found them asleep again I should take their guns from them and hand them over to Sekhome next morning in the kotla, and before all the Bamangwato! They never made their appearance again.

On Wednesday, the 21st, I took Mrs. Mackenzie and the children about three miles in the waggon, for a few hours' quiet in the country; we raised a swing for the children, and all thoroughly enjoyed the change. A little before sunset we returned to our house. One of my children exclaimed on our way home, "Who are all these coming behind us?" Looking back, I saw that about two hundred armed men were following us into the town. It seemed that when I left in the morning it was immediately taken for granted that my journey had something to do with the quarrel going on, and that I had probably an engagement to meet some of Khame's men in the country, in order to supply them with ammunition. Although we knew nothing of their proximity, we had been watched by all these armed men the whole day. Surely it must have been a rebuke to them to see that, instead of having any warlike

object whatever, we had come purely for the sake of recreation.

Sunday, the 25th, was a day of some excitement. Early in the morning Mr. B—— made his appearance, and very kindly took me aside and informed me of certain rumours which he had heard in the town, and strongly advised me not to go up to the mountain. I had already heard—not the floating rumours, but that on which they were based—the decision of a secret meeting of Sekhome's headmen, and the discussion which had then taken place. The meeting had been held in the courtyard of the chief's mother, whose opinion was always sought by Sekhome on occasions of difficulty.

"It seems to me that the Bamangwato men have become entirely changed now-a-days," said this old hag. "There is one insignificant white man who is stronger than the whole town of the Bamangwato. He owes Sekhome cows, being the wages of his men, and refuses to pay them. Had he done so in the olden time a true chief would have seized his whole herd. He takes the property of the white men, which ought to have been eaten up by the chief, and removes it to his own premises. He goes out in his waggon, or he rides out on horseback, and there is treason under every movement. Every Sunday he visits your sons, to strengthen them in that Word of God which has been their ruin. And yet you all seem to think of this little thing called a teacher, as if he had power in the town. What power can he have? Does he not go about unarmed? I am a woman, but I am this day ashamed of the men of the Bamangwato."

Several headmen then proposed the expulsion of all the white men and the plundering of their goods. Pelutona proposed extreme measures with reference to the missionary, and then, he said, no more would follow to trouble the town by teaching the Word of God.

Sekhome denied that he was afraid of the missionary; but said that no one must injure him. "The blame of having the missionary rests with me," said the chief, "for it was I who invited him to come and dwell in the town. No white man's blood must be shed in this town while I am chief. Did I not spare the Boers whom Sechele tempted

me to kill? And shall I imitate Sekeletu, and injure those who have come as friends, and whom I myself have invited? But they must all leave till this quarrel is over; and the missionary must go also, for his presence strengthens my sons."

Such had been some of the opinions expressed at this secret council. My informant was a school-girl, whose mother was the servant of the mother of Sekhome, and was in attendance upon the assembled councillors. The old woman, who was not a Christian, found occasion to go home and hastily despatch her daughter to inform me of my danger. Through this act of genuine kindness I knew the cause of the evil rumours and threats of which Mr. B—— now warned me. After considering everything, I decided to go down to Sekhome as usual, and ask his permission to ascend the mountain to preach, and if he positively refused, to return home.

For the first time, I was that Sunday hooted in the streets, and from behind hedges where I could not see the speakers. I was accompanied by a young Englishman, who in the kindest manner went with me on almost every journey to the mountains. When we reached the entrance to the kotla we met several parties of young men "dressed" for a public assembly. Some were spotted with white clay like tigers, others were striped like zebras, while every kind of fanciful head-dress was worn. A considerable gathering had already taken place at the kotla. While I was looking round for the chief, I was surprised by two old men, who suddenly approached me brandishing their spears, demanding at the same time, amid many imprecations and threats, that I should at once leave the town. They both foamed at the mouth with excitement and passion while they went on with their raving charges. After they had both said a good deal, and gesticulated with their spears to their hearts' content, I reminded them that I had the same right to be in the town as the rest of its inhabitants. My house had been built with the full approbation of Sekhome. It was for the chief to find fault with me, but it was not becoming in old men, who ought to be an example to others, to insult and threaten a defenceless man in the

kotla. They now went and sat down, exhausted by their efforts, when a person whom I did not know came up to me, and encouraged me not to heed these people; I had to look to Sekhome only.

Soon after the chief strode into the kotla, looking very gloomy and angry. He at first positively forbade my going up to the mountain to preach, but after a little expostulation and patient waiting he gruffly gave his consent. While I sat beside him he called a well-known factotum who performed a good deal of his dirty work, and he in turn went and whispered to a Matebele soldier, who was sitting at some distance, assegai in hand. When we rose to go this soldier went with us, for no object of his own that I could discover. After walking with us some distance beyond the town, he suddenly turned back.

Sekhome also asked which road I was to take. When I had finished the services on the mountain I found two companies of armed men waiting at the place I had mentioned to the chief. But it seemed to me that the men themselves were now more respectful than in the morning. It struck me as if there had been a trial of determination, and that I had gained the day. The chief had declared I was not to go up to the mountain again, but had yielded me permission in the end. He had promised to expel me from the town; he could not muster heart even to mention such a thing.

While on the mountain I learned the cause of the increased irritation on the part of Sekhome and his people. On Friday night Sekhome despatched two "lingaka," or sorcerers, with a large quantity of charms and spells, and perhaps poisons, which they were to throw into the fountain supplying water for the young chiefs' party and their cattle. Before these men started on their nefarious errand, the most potent spells were applied to themselves by the chief and the other sorcerers. When all was completed, they were assured that there would be darkness wherever they went—the clouds of night would compass them so that no eye should behold them. But alas for charms and incantations! The young chiefs had sentries posted at the water, who, instead of challenging the approach-

ing wizards, allowed them to come close to the water, when they fired, and shot the very man who carried the charms, which were found beside his lifeless body next morning. This was what had irritated the chief, who saw in this circumstance more than the death of a man: it was the proved inefficacy of their greatest charms and most solemn rites.

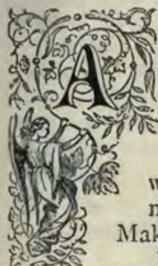
On returning to my house I found that the Englishmen on the station were unanimously of opinion that it would not be desirable for us to remain longer on the place while the disturbance was going on among the Bamangwato. They had made their own arrangements to leave, and had kindly offered my wife their assistance in the work of preparation in my absence, so that when I returned I should have the less to do. With the kindest intentions they also pictured to Mrs. Mackenzie in the strongest light the dangers of our position, and the open threats which were now used. But my wife viewed the matter very quietly, declining the proffered assistance until she should know that I had made up my mind to leave. My arrival, therefore, was that day waited for with more than ordinary anxiety. In the evening, after our usual English service, the subject was fully discussed. I represented to the traders present that in the excited state of the people's feelings, to go away would be the signal for the pillage and destruction of the property of absent hunters and traders, as well as of the mission station. For my own part, I should leave only when the chief plainly informed me that he could no longer afford me his protection. It was not to be expected, however, that temporary residents would have the same feelings as myself about leaving Shoshong, and accordingly three of the traders took their departure on the following Tuesday.

Towards myself the temper of the people gradually improved. I went up more frequently to the mountain, and sometimes as the bearer of messages from the one side to the other. One day I was standing on the brow of the hill, taking leave of the young chiefs, when a man approached from the gardens, and kneeling behind an ant-hill, took aim at the group, at a distance from us of about three hundred yards. The man had evidently some difficulty in his own mind about firing while I was one of the party; for after a short

time he retired into the shelter of the corn and sugar-cane in the garden. As soon as I left, however, he again approached, and fired upon those with whom I had been conversing. At the same place, a few days afterwards, a Dutch hunter and an English trader, who had obtained permission from the chief to visit those on the mountain, were fired upon by Sekhome's men under Ralitlari, his son. The Dutchman, who was well known in the town, was very indignant, and complained to Sekhome of the violation of his safe-conduct by his own son, but received no satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE END OF SEKHOME'S PLOT



AFTER this unhappy strife had lasted a month, Sekhome made a desperate effort to bring it to a close. He resolved to ascend the mountain and besiege Khame's position, so as to cut off his supply of water. For this purpose he called in all the neighbouring Bakalahari, mustered all the Makalaka, and every available man in Shoshong.

Khame and his people stood the siege for eight days. During this time their live stock got no water. Even for themselves they could only procure melons from the gardens in the night by eluding the vigilance of those who invested their position. I saw the oxen and the sheep and goats when they had been seven days without water. Their piteous lowing and bleating might have been heard at a considerable distance. It was evident that this state of things could not last long.

Latterly I had been the bearer of milder messages than formerly from camp to camp. At the request of Khame I led over a horse to Sekhome, which had fallen into the hands of his sons' followers. The chief now professed to me that he had not come to fight; he had only come to beg Khame to come home again.

Khame first requested that a separate position in the town should be assigned to him and to all who were with him on the mountain. He said he knew that the customs of the Word of God were displeasing to his father, and therefore proposed that those who adopted them should

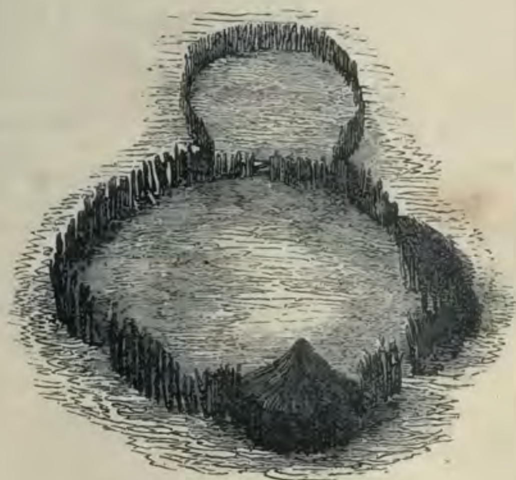
be allowed to reside in a division of the town by themselves. Should enemies attack the town they would be found at their post, although they would not attend upon the constantly recurring heathen ceremonies. Sekhome, however, was too far-seeing to consent to this. Had he done so, in less than a year the majority of the young people would have deserted him.

Khame's next message to Sekhome was that he would return to the town on condition that his father should retire first, and allow him to enter the town as a free person, and not as a captive. He protested that he had been unjustly driven from the town, and cruelly hunted on the mountain, whereas he had never attacked the town, and had himself shown no enmity to his father. Sekhome did not at first agree to this demand of his son, which would rob himself and his party of the honour of driving their captives before them into the town amid the plaudits of the assembled population. But at length an interview took place between Sekhome and Khame at the camp of the former, when Sekhome agreed to return to the town first, and that Khame should follow with his men some hours after.

When the young chief made his appearance in the neighbourhood of the town the applause was not so great as had been given to Sekhome, but still many cheered him. The conquered party sat down at the entrance to the courtyard, and were there detained a long time before Sekhome condescended to "call" his son to approach him and occupy the place of honour. After this took place, the young chief's followers returned to their own homes, and the division in the town of the Bamangwato was outwardly healed. Some time after, in giving me an account of these things, Khame said his idea in stipulating that he should be allowed to re-enter the town at the head of his own men, was to show that he had done no wrong before he was expelled; and that, whilst willing to return, he adhered to the opinions on account of which he had been driven out.

But there were some men on the mountain for whom it was well known Sekhome had no quarter. If Khame was to return to the town, these men must flee. Chief ot these was Tshukuru, whom Khamane agreed to accompany

as a protector. Khame had received a letter from Sechele a few days before, in which he offered any of them a place of refuge so long as the anger of Sekhome lasted. In this epistle Tshukuru's name was specially mentioned. It was nevertheless feared that Sechele might not keep this promise in the case of a man who had thwarted him in some of his cherished schemes; but it was imagined that if he was accompanied by a son of Sekhome, and one who, like



THE KOTLA AT SHOSHONG.

Sechele himself, professed to be a Christian, no act of violence would take place. In this, however, they were mistaken, for although he was received with apparent friendliness, Tshukuru was secretly put to death by order of Sechele. Although a headman, his body was never buried, but was eaten by the wolves.

Thus died Tshukuru, a scheming and ambitious man, whose aims in the town of the Bamangwato were of a character as selfish and unprincipled as those of Sekhome.

Sechele owed Tshukuru a grudge, because he was as astute as himself, and had co-operated with him in the execution of certain schemes only in so far as was pleasing to himself, and not so far as Sechele would have desired. The assassination of Tshukuru is a dark blot on the name of Sechele.

When the news reached Shoshong, the large division of the town of which Tshukuru was the headman joined in sounding the death-wail of the murdered man. "Oh, where shall we find him? Who shall now provide for us? Who will take his place in the council, or the chase, or the field of battle? Where shall we find him?" And then followed the wild chorus, expressive of great anguish—"Yo—yo—yo!" the mourners falling on their faces, tearing their hair, and beating their breast in the frenzy of their sorrow. This harrowing dirge was frequently heard in such a large town as Shoshong. Its loudness and its long duration indicated the high rank of the person who had passed away. Christianity causes the death-wail to cease. In Bechwanaland those who profess to be believers mourn over their dead with as much self-restraint as people now do in England, and with much less heathenish demonstration than was exhibited, after centuries of Christian teaching, in the Celtic lyk-wake.

But the commotions at Shoshong were not to end with the return of Khame to the town. A new source of trouble soon after appeared in the person of Macheng, the brother of Sekhome, and the legal chief of the Bamangwato. Sekhome had made overtures to him when he found that the sympathies of the Bamangwato were with his sons. But as soon as he saw that he would be able himself to subdue all opposition, he tried to draw back, and to dissuade his brother from coming. But Macheng was not to be thus put off. He had been invited, and he resolutely ignored all subsequent messages of a different import. He made his appearance therefore at Shoshong in the month of May, at the head of those Bamangwato men who had fled with him some eight years before. He left the women and the children until he should find what his own reception was to be. When Macheng arrived, Khame informed me that it

was quite possible he would now have to flee. He was aware that Macheng was pledged to put him to death. He had given this promise to Sekhome before he left Sechele's town. Khame was entirely ignorant as to what course he would take, now that he had arrived; but if I heard that he had suddenly left the town, I was to understand that he had done so in order to avoid assassination.

For many weeks after his arrival Macheng preserved the utmost reserve. He lived in great retirement, sleeping and eating only in the company of his own men. Sekhome introduced Macheng to the Bamangwato at a public assembly. He told the people that he had called home his brother from his exile, and that he was now their chief. The smooth-tongued and somewhat bewildered headmen rose one after the other to praise Sekhome, and to greet Macheng.

At length Khame rose and spoke. Addressing himself to Macheng, he said:—"Khosi! (king), it would appear that I alone of all the Bamangwato am to speak unpleasant words to you this day. The Bamangwato say they are glad to see you here. I say I am not glad to see you. If Sekhome could not live with his own children, but drove them from the town, and shot at them, how is he to submit to be ruled by you? how will he learn to obey? If I thought there would be peace in the town, I would say I was glad to see you; I say I am sorry you have come, because I know that only disorder and death can take place when two chiefs sit in one kotla." Turning to the people, he said, "I wish all the Bamangwato to know that I renounce all pretensions to the chieftainship of the Bamang wato. Here are two chiefs already; I refuse to be called the third, as some of you have mockingly styled me. My kingdom consists in my gun, my horses, and my waggon. If you will give me liberty to possess these as a private person, I renounce all concern in the politics of the town. Especially do I refuse to attend night meetings. When men sit together in the dark, and are afraid to hold their meeting in the daylight, they themselves confess that their deeds are evil. If you wish me to attend your meetings, they must be held in the daylight. I am sorry, Macheng

that I cannot give you a better welcome to the Bamangwato."

This was a marvellous speech to fall among double-tongued, reticent, and scheming men. What was to be done with a man whose delight seemed to be to destroy all crooked counsels, and put an end to the "botlale" (wisdom) on which the Bechwana headmen plumed themselves? The common people, however, secretly applauded Khame, although they were afraid to do so openly.

A little before the assembly broke up, Macheng rose and said, "Many speeches have been made to-day, many words of welcome have been addressed to me. All these I have heard with the ear; one speech, and one only, has reached my heart, and that is the speech of Khame. I thank Khame for his speech."

Some time after this, Macheng had a private interview with Khame, when he asked for the young chief's confidence. He said his mind had been poisoned by the false statements which Sekhome had published throughout Bechwanaland concerning his sons. All the chiefs and people living at a distance believed these reports, and had recommended him at once to fulfil his promise on his arrival, and put the disobedient sons to death. "But since I arrived at Shoshong," continued Macheng, "I have seen and heard for myself. The people of the Word of God alone speak the truth. By all the rest I am met with fair speeches and deceit. Henceforth you may trust in me, as I will rely on you."

In the public courtyard some time after this, Macheng said to Sekhome, "You called me from the Bakwena to kill your rebellious sons. My heart refuses to do this. They are your sons, not mine; if you wish them to be killed, kill them yourself."

Thus the unnatural plot of Sekhome fell to the ground. Afraid lest his men should now desert him, Sekhome, in his blandest manner, proposed to Macheng that there should be only one public courtyard in the town, at which both Macheng and he should sit. Were they not brothers? They might quarrel if they had separate courts; but not if they had only one. Macheng, however, fully apprehended

the drift of his brother's treacherous proposition; and insisted on laying out a kotla for himself, round which he and his friends could build. Sekhome was thus placed in a secondary position in the town; and Macheng was the acknowledged chief of the Bamangwato. Liberty to attend upon instruction was once more enjoyed. Macheng did not come to church himself, but he did not hinder his people from coming.

As Sekhome was no longer in a position to take undue advantage of the concession which I was about to make, I resolved to put an end to the only ostensible grounds of dispute between him and me, and to pay his men whom I had hired twelve months' wages for six months' work. I accordingly called Sekhome, and paid him his unreasonable demand. That night he paid me a visit, with only one attendant, after his old custom.

"Why did you quarrel with me, Sekhome?" I inquired. "You always knew that my heart was white towards you."

"It's all past now," said the ex-chief. "It was not on your own account that I quarrelled with you, but to further my plans against Tshukuru and my children."

No one who knew Sekhome ever expected that he would live quietly under Macheng. He was soon at his favourite work of hatching plots—holding those secret councils which had been denounced by his son, and dealing largely, as before, in charms and incantations. Most of the old men still favoured his cause. It was resolved that he should now rid himself of all his enemies at one blow. An assembly was to be called. Macheng and Khame, and all Sekhome's enemies, were to be left to take their places in the courtyard first. It would only remain for Sekhome and his trusty followers to surround them, and at least make sure of the leaders.

Macheng, without suspicion, agreed to call the assembly. When the day arrived on which it was to take place, the followers of Macheng were about to fall into the trap. But Khame had been informed, by some secret friend, of the conspiracy, perhaps with the idea that he would himself keep back, and allow Macheng to fall into the snare. But Khame at once gave notice to Macheng, who ordered

his men not to assemble in the public courtyard until Sekhome's adherents had first taken their places. Frustrated in the scheme which he had laid, Sekhome still thought it possible to accomplish the main object which he had in view—the death of a few of his chief opponents. He therefore gave notice to his men that when he assaulted one of Macheng's men in the courtyard, this was to be the signal of a general attack upon them, and especially upon their leaders.

Sekhome accordingly advanced into the yard at the head of his men, and striking one of Macheng's men, felled him to the ground. But his followers had not the courage to support this bold course in the face of those who were prepared to receive them. Or, perhaps, they suddenly saw an easier way out of the difficulty; for, closing round Sekhome, they advised him to flee! With only a single attendant the chief now fled from the town, and took refuge in the mountain. The assembly was never held. When the chief struck the headman of Macheng, the people rose in a body, and went "every man to his own house."

That evening a solitary figure was observed descending the mountain near to my house. It was Sekhome. He could no longer trust his own people; he knew he could still trust the missionary. He seemed relieved when he entered the house. I had now a glorious opportunity of rewarding good for evil, and took advantage of it. I gave him refreshments, and he sat down at my fireside. We had a long conversation, in the course of which I recalled to his mind an interview which I had had with him before he began to quarrel with his sons. From some remarks which he had then made to me, I was led to see that his mind was being poisoned against his eldest sons; and I then took occasion most solemnly to warn him against being led away by designing men from loving and confiding in his own children. "Did I not assure you," I asked, "that Khame would never seek to supplant you as chief; but that if you turned against your own children, whom God had given to support and defend you, evil would inevitably overtake you? You forgot my words; and those whose advice you followed, and who urged you on to fight with your own sons, have this day

forsaken you and cast you off. Notwithstanding all the bitter words which you have spoken, your best friends in Shoshong to-day are the sons whom you have so cruelly

APRONS WORN BY BAMANGWATO WOMEN.

used." That night Sekhome fled with only three or four attendants.

To a writer of fiction it would be easy to construct a

more telling story than that of this "house divided against itself." The vengeance of Heaven might be introduced as falling upon the persecutor. The disciples might be exhibited as dying resignedly for the sake of their Lord amid the scornful taunts of the heathen. In such a story we should be careful to keep the Christians separate from the heathen. But having to narrate facts and not to compose fiction, I have had to describe a struggle in which not more than half a dozen lost their lives, and these neither Christians nor leading persecutors. And I have had to relate that one of the difficulties and trials of the position of the "people of the Word of God" was that they were surrounded by some personal friends who were no friends of the new religion.

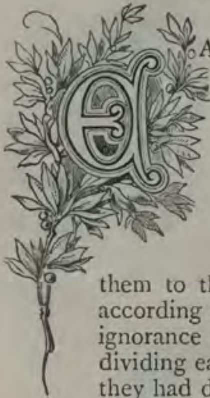
It will at least appear from this narrative, that our work at Shoshong was carried on for a considerable period under adverse circumstances. We were thankful, indeed, that we were not expelled and the buildings on the station destroyed. In the end, however, the missionary was the only public character who succeeded in keeping his place in the midst of so many plots and counter-plots. By the blessing of God he was able to secure and to retain the confidence of the people. He came at length to be recognised as the friend of all and the enemy of none. He was defamed and persecuted by Sekhome, yet that chief was in reality his jealous guardian against the over-zealous enmity which he himself had excited. He restrained his people with the promise that he would expel the supposed evil-doer; but he could never summon up resolution to give "the teacher" his orders to depart from the town. Lest, however, evil might befall him, he tried to frighten him away. And when the chief's own day of calamity came, he had no hesitation in repairing to the missionary's house; he counted upon a kindly reception there.

The Christian life and character were a new force in the town of the Bamangwato. It was a thing to be wondered at—perhaps admired. It was aimed at not only by the missionary, but by their own countrymen who had "entered the Word of God." The Christians had headed the attack on the Matebele, and in defence of their homes, but had refused supremacy in the town when it was to be obtained

by parricide. When driven from their home they had acted only in self-defence. When conquered and brought back to the town they remained steadfast to their principles. One explanation which they gave of this new kind of life was, that I was a potent wizard, and had cast my spells upon the young chiefs and the other Christians. Thank God, the spell was a higher and a purer one—the world-conquering spell of the love of Jesus Christ. They had seen the Lord Himself, and were seeking to serve Him. With all their failings and mistakes, the Christian party, and especially their leaders Khame and his brother Khamane, exhibited during the struggle a spirit which is worthy of the admiration of the Christian Church.

CHAPTER XXII.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK.



EARLY in 1867 I commenced to build a church at Shoshong, having secured the services of two bricklayers. In the absence of a more qualified workman, I undertook the woodwork as my department. Macheng was kind enough to furnish me with two regiments of men to assist me in felling the timber. When I followed them to the forest I found they had cut down, according to my orders, some tall trees, but in their ignorance had afterwards destroyed the timber by dividing each tree into several pieces! They said they had done so for the convenience of those who would have to lift the trees into a waggon!

I explained to them that they must leave the trees at their greatest length, and expressed my fear that we should not find a sufficient number long enough to span the new church.

My assistants, who were chiefly old men, loudly expressed their disapprobation and incredulity. "Why cut such large trees? It was wrong to fell them with an axe. Hitherto they had always been burned down when a man wanted to clear a field for cultivation. After they were felled, it was evident that no human beings could ever lift them. Macheng and the missionary had laid their heads together to impose a burden on them to no purpose," &c.

In the end I had to hire other men before a sufficient quantity of timber was cut down. In them I had more willing assistants; but the work of the backwoodsman was

hard for such people. I encouraged them by slaughtering an ox for their use; and Khamane, who accompanied me to the forest, killed a giraffe. The tall and resinous tambootie tree, which I selected for beams and rafters, was easily split. The partially dressed logs we conveyed to Shoshong in waggons, which were kindly lent me by both Europeans and natives. A pit-saw was next set to work, and after a few lessons, two raw natives were able to use it, and sawed almost all the timber for the church. Macheng again assisted me by ordering two regiments of women to cut bundles of grass for thatch.

The building, made to hold some 500 people, was finished by the end of the year. There are no pews or forms; the people bring their camp-stools, or sit on the ground as they are accustomed to do elsewhere. A pulpit was afterwards made for the church by Mr. T. Wood, a Yorkshireman, who afterwards died of fever in Mashonaland.

When the church was finished, I resolved to celebrate its opening in a manner which would give me at once an opportunity of publicly thanking Macheng for his assistance in procuring both wood and grass, and also ot addressing the old men of the town, who, as a class, gave least attention to the preaching of the Gospel. I thought I could copy a little from their own usages, and along with some instruction provide for them an entertainment such as they are accustomed to on occasions of rejoicing. Having consulted an "authority" on such matters, I found that my project would be entirely orthodox and agreeable from a native point of view. I accordingly gave the invitation to Macheng "to meet me with his people in the new church on Tuesday, the 7th of January, to see the house which they had assisted me to build, to hear why it was built, and to partake of the ox with which I thanked them for their assistance."

Early on Tuesday morning the people began to assemble at the church. Each division of the town came headed by its chief. Heathen men with hoary heads, toothless and tottering with old age, came leaning on their staffs. Full-grown men—the haughty, the cunning, the fierce—came with those younger in years, of brighter eye and more

hopeful mien. As to their clothing, the heathen dress admits of little variety. But many appeared dressed partly or wholly in European attire—and here there was variety enough. We had the usual members of the congregation, some of whom were neatly dressed. But sticklers for "the proprieties" would have been shocked to see a man moving in the crowd who considered himself well dressed, although wearing a shirt only; another with trousers only; a third with a black "swallow-tail," closely buttoned to the chin—the only piece of European clothing which the man wore; another with a soldier's red coat, overshadowed by an immense wide-awake hat, the rest of the dress being articles of heathen wear, &c. &c.

The church doors were thrown open, and many strange remarks were made with reference to the building. One man said, "What a splendid place to drink beer in!" another, "What a capital pen for sheep and goats!" and a third declared that with a few people inside they could defy the Matebele nation.

I observed an unwillingness on the part of some of the old men to enter the church. Thinking it arose only from superstitious feelings, I went out and persuaded them to go in. I learned afterwards that these dark-minded people had conceived that foul play was that day to be enacted by the Christians in revenge for their previous hardships and sufferings at the hands of the heathen. They could not believe that all had been forgiven; they could only measure other minds by their own. And so they had come fully prepared for the worst, and the hand which was concealed below their mantle grasped a large knife or dagger, which they hoped would stand them in good stead when "the people of the Word of God" rose on them, within the new church, and sought to take their lives. The unsuspecting confidence with which I spoke to these men, and invited and pressed them to enter the House of God, must surely have touched their treacherous and suspicious hearts. The simple address, the solemn prayer, followed by open-hearted hospitality, must surely have suggested to those heathen men that the thoughts of the Christians were not their thoughts.

I held no regular service in the church, for had I done so some would have said I got them to be present at it under false pretences. My short address was composed of thoughts which had been gathering in my mind for years, but which I never had an opportunity to deliver before such an audience. The attention of the people was thoroughly arrested during the whole of the time I was speaking. I concluded my part of the engagements of the morning by solemn prayer, and then called upon Macheng to speak, if he desired to do so. Knowing the caution and reticence of his race, I was not surprised that the chief declined to speak in such circumstances.

We now adjourned to the vicinity of our kitchen, where Mrs. Mackenzie and the servants had had a busy time cooking the ox, which I had slaughtered as soon as I had received Macheng's acceptance of the invitation. The pots and dishes of all kinds, with the meat, I showed to Macheng, and requested him to divide their contents. A considerable quantity of sour milk, and a few camp-kettles full of tea, completed the bill of fare for this Bechwana breakfast-party. Tables and chairs, knives and forks, bread and vegetables, we were content to regard as superfluities, afterthoughts; the first and main thought was the beef, and to that attention was given.

It was feared by one who did not wish to give a stingy entertainment, that one ox would not be enough for so many guests, but my "authority" decided otherwise. He said the chief himself killed only one ox at a time; it would therefore be over-lavish in me to kill more. My "authority" was right. Although no miracle was performed, every one seemed to get something; every one was pleased.

As the feast proceeded, it was announced to Macheng that a certain headman had been overlooked. What was to be done? The meat was gone—the sour milk had disappeared: but, happy thought! the tea remained. Handing the man a large quantity of tea, the chief said to him: "Drink, for there is no longer aught to eat. The tea was prepared at the same fire as the meat; it is therefore quite the same thing; drink, for tea is your part of the feast."

The man quietly sat down with his camp-kettle of tea, and drank it all.

After the people had departed, Macheng, Khame, and Khamane sat down at our table to a part of the same ox—this time, however, eaten with knife and fork.

I have reason to believe that the best impression was produced on the people's minds by the doings of that morning. I learned afterwards that for days my address was the subject of remark in the kotla, the majority declaring that "the words" were unanswerable. A few inveterate heathens, however, said "they could see nothing in the words; they thought they had been called to church to assist in praying for rain, and not to listen to such strange doctrines." On the whole, the result of the meeting was that heathenism did not carry the high head that it was wont to do.

In order to follow up the good impression produced, I began a regular course of district visitation. I appeared every Wednesday evening, accompanied by one or other of the leading members of the congregation, at the kotla of the headman of a division of the town, and requested him to call his people together in his courtyard to hear the Word of God. In general the headmen were willing to do this. In every case they consented to do it, after some patient waiting. Many of them were adverse to calling the women, who are not usually allowed to enter the courtyard. This point was also yielded; but the women, who saw the reluctance of their lords, sat down at the very entrance of the kotla. The little children ran about in all directions, sometimes planting themselves in open-mouthed wonder opposite the strange white man to whom all the grown-up people were listening. The majority of these Wednesday evening congregations were people who did not come to church. To them also was the Gospel preached—"to every creature," was the Divine commission. Sometimes as many as three hundred came together; in smaller districts the audience would number some thirty or forty. One result of these district meetings was to increase the number of those who desired to learn to read for themselves the Word of God.

The missionary in modern times has an advantage over his predecessors of a more ignorant age. Devoted servants of the Church of Rome braved every danger in their work, and secured from the ignorant heathen the homage which self-denial and purity of life will always call forth. But the strict monastic life was unreal and unattainable to the mass of men. The people gazed upon it with reverence from a distance. There was much in such a system to excite their homage and their awe; there was little for them to copy. The missions of the English churches have not yet reached the development of the Roman Catholic establishments. Whether or not a model Christian village would be the best missionary institution, is a question still before the churches. But at present the life of the missionary is such as can be copied by his flock. In the mission-house they can see a home like their own, only better kept, purer, and sweeter. While a missionary busies himself with the men, his wife (if he is fortunate enough to have one) teaches the women to sew and to cut out dresses, and prescribes simple medicines for themselves and their children when they are ill. If the missionary among the men has the strength and the wisdom of an elder brother, his wife secures the confidence and affection of the women, and, by her own example, influences them to a higher and a purer life. The life of the mission-house is attainable, and is desirable, even in the eyes of the heathen. After being shown, at their own request, some of the rooms of our house, a party of the wives of petty chiefs at length broke out, addressing Mrs. Mackenzie: "Happy wife and happy mother! You have a 'kingdom' here of your own!"

I may here describe a Sunday at Shoshong. I began the day's services by conducting a Bible-class, which was composed of all who could read the New Testament, and of others who sat as auditors. A chapter or portion of Scripture was read in order every Sunday by those present, after which I questioned them on what they had been reading. I invited them also to put questions to me. By this means I found out what impression the Divine words of Scripture produced on minds whose past training and habits of thought had been so different from my own. I

have been saddened by the vacant-minded pupil, who had no question to propound, and hardly an answer to give to the question asked by me. But I have been often gratified with a ready and intelligent answer, and sometimes with a question which evidenced considerable grasp of mind. The narrative parts of Scripture were always read with the greatest interest by the class; their estimate of actions and of characters passing before us was often put in a fresh and striking manner. I regarded my Bible-class as one of the most important engagements of the day. The morning service which followed lasted about an hour and a quarter. In the afternoon it was my custom to go down to the chief's courtyard and hold service there. When the new church was being built I heard the complaint that the site was too far away from the town, and that I must not be surprised if many old people did not attend. This was stated by those who attended occasionally, and who I fancied were not sorry to have what seemed a tolerable excuse for not attending at all. I promised these people, however, that I should obviate all difficulties by bringing "the Word" to the public courtyard of the town on the Sunday afternoon. I had thus every week an opportunity of addressing both those who were halting between two opinions, and the heathen who were opposed to the new doctrine, but who would not always rise up and go away, although I have seen them occasionally do so. I had also most of those present who were at the morning service.

As soon as the service in the town was over, I hastened home, and found the Europeans who might be then at Shoshong waiting for me on the verandah. We had now a service in English in my parlour, not lasting longer than an hour. I had always great pleasure in this service, and kept it up regularly, however few might be present. It was usually attended by all the Europeans—people of all Christian Churches joining in our simple worship. The passing hunter, arriving on Friday or Saturday, made a point of coming up to the service in English on Sunday evening. The resident traders at Shoshong were exemplary in their attendance, being seldom absent. Old associations were revived; early and perhaps forgotten vows brought

to remembrance. The Christian Church at this distant outpost of her army had words of comfort and strengthening, of warning and entreaty, to offer to her wandering children, and since my departure from Shoshong, this office has been discharged by Mr. Hepburn with increasing success.

In a place of safety, and beside certain certificates and other documents of personal interest and value, I treasure an address which was presented to me, along with a sum of money, by the members of this English congregation, on the occasion of my leaving the station of Shoshong. There is no document in my possession on which I set greater store than this spontaneous and unexpected expression of affection and of respect from my fellow-countrymen and other English-speaking people in Bechwanaland. Fully assured of the affection of my Bamangwato congregation, and also of the confidence of the chief and others who remained attached to heathenism, I regarded the address referred to as an indication that I had not altogether failed in what I had always set before me as an object—to be the servant of all classes in the Gospel of Christ, and to endeavour not to set class against class, or colour against colour, but to endeavour to unite all in the common service of God through Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A GLANCE OVER TWENTY YEARS.

"Where the Greek saw barbarians, we see brethren; where the Greek saw heroes and demi-gods, we see our parents and ancestors; where the Greek saw nations (ἔθνη), we see mankind, toiling and suffering, separated by oceans, divided by language, and severed by national enmity—yet evermore tending, under a Divine control, towards the fulfilment of that inscrutable purpose for which the world was created, and man placed in it, bearing the image of God."—MAX MÜLLER, "Comparative Mythology," *Oxford Essays*, 1586.

WE have now reached the limits of the present volume, which is on pioneer work in Bechwanaland. Other work has since engaged our attention, both at Shoshong and at Kuruman—the story of which may be told elsewhere.

Between 1871 and 1876 the Rev. J. D. Hepburn shared with us the evangelistic work at Shoshong.

In 1872 I was appointed to commence a theological class; and candidates for the Bechwana native ministry, approved by the missionaries, came to Shoshong to be under my care. Part of their duty was to visit the various sections of the large town of Shoshong, and to endeavour by preaching and conversation to lead the Bamangwato to Christ.

In 1876 we removed to Kuruman, where the Moffat Institution has been erected in memory of the late Dr. Moffat. Here the district church has been under my care, as also the theological classes. A boarding school for boys under Mr. Brown, and another for girls under Mrs. Cockin, have also been commenced at Kuruman in connection with the

Moffat Institution. The theological students and boys are taught gardening and field work as practised by Europeans, while cultivating the gardens which have been set apart for the use of the Institution. At present Mr. Brown has charge of the Theological department; while Mr. A. J. Wookey, whose health failed in the East African Mission after he had successfully performed the journey to Ujiji—having returned to Bechwanaland, in which he had previously laboured—conducts the boys' boarding-school. With a stable government in Bechwanaland the educational work at Kuruman could be indefinitely extended and developed.

Since 1876 the station of Shoshong has been under the care of Mr. Hepburn, whose labours among European traders as well as the Bamangwato have been incessant. And as if these were not enough, he volunteered to establish a mission at Lake Nghabe—the success of which we have already described.

Speaking of the Bamangwato tribe at Shoshong, it can be affirmed that in little more than twenty years the trade of the country has entirely changed; that the clothing of the people has also changed; that, to a great extent, so have their domestic and other implements. And the precursor of these changes, and the cause of them, is the change that has taken place in the religion of the people. We have the inner circle of Christian people, those who profess to be influenced by the love of Christ in their hearts—with other circles of those who are almost persuaded, or who are earnestly studying the Divine story of love and mercy. Then we have the large class who are swayed by a popular movement, and themselves join in it, with more or less indistinct ideas as to their reasons for doing so. These classes would together embrace a large proportion of the inhabitants of Shoshong; but it must not be lost sight of that there still remains a considerable number in that town who continue to oppose the Word of God and hinder the work of the Mission. Their open opponents are chiefly of two classes—the old heathen, and such young men as have already formed the evil habits of the heathen life. When such opposition shall have altogether died out in the world, the millennium will have dawned.

In the meantime there can be no doubt that the true outlet (a divinely appointed one) for the zeal of converts is to work for the enlightenment of their neighbours and fellow-countrymen. Therefore the successes achieved in the Bechwanaland mission should lead to increased aggressive work in the regions beyond, till at length the mission reaches and crosses the Zambese river, the European pioneer being accompanied and supported by trained native ministers and experienced native Christians.

The Christian Church has always exhibited the highest types of character when fighting for some worthy and specific object. In the evangelisation of Pagan lands there is a vast object, than which none can be worthier, as none is nearer to the heart of Christ Himself. "The Gospel for every creature" must be the new rallying cry of the Christian Church. In pursuing such an object, elevated types of Christianity may be expected to appear. This is more than rescuing an empty tomb from infidel hands. It is to rescue and restore the blurred and defiled and well-nigh obliterated image of God in His creature man. All honest industry may be service to God; but this is angels' work. It is to carry the blessed daylight of Christianity into benighted regions, where human spirits are groping, with nothing to lighten them but the *ignis fatuus* of superstition. It is to dispense the heavenly balm of Christ's Gospel to souls sick unto death. It is to combine in one life the highest service of man with the service of God; to help and to sympathise with the struggling repentant spirit seeking after the light; and when the light has been found, to rejoice with Heaven in its joy "over one sinner that repenteth."

Where then are the knights burning with enthusiasm to engage in this noblest crusade? What ducal house or lordly name is represented among the missionaries of the English churches? Will not the men and the women of an age which we affect to despise rise against their judges, and condemn them for their greater selfishness and love of ease?

Or is it that in modern times there is a return to the manner of early Christianity, and He who called the unlearned and the obscure to be His disciples and witnesses,

whilst now receiving the homage of the titled and the wealthy, as at the beginning, still chooses for his evangelists in Pagan lands men from among men, so that the success may be attributed to the message itself, and not to the political or social influence of the messenger?

To evangelise Pagan lands then is not only *a* duty : it is *the* duty of the Church of Christ. It is the same error for a Church to confine her energies to her own borders, and to exist for herself, as it is for the individual Christian to live upon his own inner frames and feelings ; or to extract from Christianity only that which pleases and soothes his own feelings and tastes.

The work of aggressive Christianity ought to be earnestly brought before the attention of the children of Christian families. Children see the names of their parents in a list of subscriptions, or possibly hear their father speak as chairman of a missionary meeting, but beyond these things no mention is made of the subject ; or perhaps the mother or the nurse assembles the very young children on a Sunday afternoon or evening, and tells them some strange story about missionaries abroad. I am afraid that boys in some cases are even discouraged from giving their attention to the service of the church either at home or abroad, and the argument is used to them that if they can only succeed in making enough money they can have more influence for good than if they become ministers or missionaries. This is certainly not what the father said when he stood on the missionary platform. He then declared that the work of the missionary was the noblest on earth, and urged young men to give their attention to it.

It is not to be wondered at if, after listening to such diverse advices, chilling doubt and suspicion on the most sacred subjects enter the mind of the young man, and he learns to sum up in a few words the maxims of his home and of the society in which he moves, "Money is the chief thing ; therefore get money." Of all the representatives of Christian English homes who are to be found in all parts of the world, how many are Christian evangelists? This is not asked by way of disparaging the honest and honourable pursuits of commerce, nor underrating the service which

commercial men can render to the cause of religion. But I still ask,—Is it befitting the merciful and unselfish spirit of our Christianity, or its immense importance to mankind, that so much of our energy should be devoted to ourselves—so little to God and our fellow-men; so much effort put forth from deference to the wishes or maxims of friends or society—so little in obedience to the command or from regard to the strong desire of our Lord and Saviour?

To the Christian boy or young man who may have accompanied me thus far in my story, I shall address my concluding sentences. I remember it was pleasant to dream of the possibilities of the future, while sitting listening to the music of the mountain stream, the eye meanwhile watching the ever-changing clouds of the deep-blue summer sky. By the winter fireside also I often mused of the coming years, and of the many-sidedness of human life, while forms and shapes appeared and disappeared in the glowing embers before me. To him who has reached those years of reverie and resolve, let me address an honest heart-felt word:—If you have faith in your Saviour and a sound constitution; if you have acquired or can obtain a liberal education; if you are not particular about what you eat and drink, or the hardness or softness of the bed you sleep on; if you believe that Christ is able and willing to do for all men what he has done for you—young man, leave the money-making to your brothers. Let there be at least one out of every family devoted to the Church and to aggressive Christianity. Be a missionary—a preacher of the Gospel among the heathen—a good soldier of Jesus Christ!

THE END.

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