

Letter to Robert Moffat 1, 29 September 1847

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Kolobeng 29 Sept^r 1847

My Dear Father

By the arrival of Koultter on his way southwards we are put in possession of another opportunity to inform you how we proceed in this quarter. I need not say I do so with pleasure I only wish you may enjoy as much in the perusal as I do in the writing. We are all at present in tolerable health But the setting in of the hot season seems to try our stamina. Mary is troubled with shooting pains in the chest. Had sore eyes but not severely & is now recovered - She got them from the little one Hope we may through the Divine mercy be favoured with health - We have so much to do it seems desirable we should but we must be resigned to the will of Him who knows what is best for us & His cause. We feel it hot now we have plenty of Hills behind us, sufficient one would think to screen us from the influence of the Southern icebergs - And all burning Africa spread out before us to the North But we are within the blessed sound of gurgling waters - they have nightingales in England but of all the birds in the world commend me to the merry midnight frogs. You cannot concieve yes you can how delighted we were to hear the sound of waters at night, irrigateable water too. In my last I informed you of our removal. Mebaloe & I built huts & removed into them Paul followed [0002]

& is now roofing his. Your tent has done him good service - Ours is 24 by 12, & a pack house has since been added 10 by 12 ft, Mebaloe's 16 by 12. Pauls the same size as ours - the town is still in process of building our corner has a touch of the European for all are square & Mebaloe is thatcher to all. Even our man Friday alias Morukewelo has got up one of the four cornered sort & declares he will never leave it it is so beautiful - our plan was to get up temporary houses & a temporary meeting house as soon as possible in order that

teaching might go on regularly during the time we
 we should be occupied in making gardens
 We have now got nearly to the point at which we
 can with good consciences begin to labour
 for the meat which perisheth - the chief without
 any suggestion from me, told me it was his desire
 to build a house for God - that I should be at no
 expense whatever with it - He even thought that
 we should do nothing in the work but to this [^][latter] we
 objected as it was for the worsh of the God of all
 I think sometimes that he expects God will bless him for
 his good work - Yet he expresses himself occasionally
 quite in the orthodox style. He wished to build a very
 fine house but we cannot at present spend more
 time on it than making it a temporary affair
 of pole & reed - He employed all the males in cutting reed
 & sent them a good distance to select the straightest
 woods they could find - He began it on Saturday
 morning & met in the walls on Sunday. Many
 hands make light work here it was not light work
 to keep them from doing too much. We made it
 40 by 15. We found they had cut the beams too short
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 for our plans & rather than wait for longer put it up at
 15 instead of 20. On tuesday it was finished except the closing
 in at the top but the reed being deficient they have been off
 cutting it today - We shall probably begin to our water cours
 on Monday next, too late for corn but we may yet have maize
 & vegetables - Another proposition of the chief is that we
 make an exchange of work - He takes the watercourse
 & we build him a European house. We are glad enough
 to do this for we are but few in number. I intend
 to give a door, an old one, I may make or sell him
 a window - We have lost much time in removing
 & we have yet to go & get the door frames & Iron in
 the roof - We shall burn both school & house in
 order that we may pick out the nails and
 prevent any boor taking up his abode therein
 When we returned we found many boors on the
 place - Some were rather impudent - dogged Paul's
 wife untill she hid herself in Mebaloe's house. The latter
 has more firmness than the former - All of the boors
 made off as soon as possible after we came. I did
 not shake hands with the fellows as I did when among
 them in our Eastern Journey I felt like the "cock on
 its ain middenhead". One gave Sechele a bottle of brandy.
 their children employed their time in digging license & ran
 among Paul's children as if equals. - When we came
 I felt in doubt as whether it was not duty to go immediately
 with Paul & settle him with Mokhatla, leaving the
 removal [^][of the Bakwains] to another year. Since hearing of the above

named conduct I fear it might be improper. We were subsequently informed that in our absence, deputies were sent by the Bakaa & Makalaka to ask our influence with Sechele to grant them liberty to live in his country as independent people. Sekhome is now using them in a very tyrannical manner
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Although living in their land, since he has got guns he compells them to pay him tribute. (I shall return to him again) Finding us absent they did not disclose their object in coming publicly but informed the chiefs brother in private, they passed on to the Bakhatla & when there were told that I should never return, that I had fled from Sechele &c &c. The messengers told what the Bakhatla said & on leaving stated they would come again if the Sekoa returned - One of the messengers is the son of Shue the chief of the Bakaa, I knew him very well. Shue's wife knows you. The prospect of these two tribes coming nearer made me think of forming a sort of circuit north them & Mokhatla & keeping one of our number always engaged among them. but present engagements prevent us from doing anything but at home. We cannot part with Mebaloe - He works so hard he is our right hand. Paul has never been accustomed to work but is the best theologian by far. We sent a message to Mokhatla anent your present but he has not yet made his appearance - It has been Hurry scurry ever since we came & will be for some time to come. I forgot to mention above that Sechele is favourable to the approach of these tribes because they are manufacturers in wood & iron. Sekhomi monopolize all the trade in front of him - He will not allow any one to pass him Southwards - There is a good way to the Lake but he keeps it shut as you will hear by the Griquas. If any one went past him & opened up the way he would be conferring a benefit on the tribes beyond. When will you go to the Lake? If you dont next season I may as a relaxation take a trip in that direction. I should like you to go as you have become in a manner pledged to it - I think it would be well if first visited by
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a missionary. The Griquas will certainly reach it next season. Kañkashi is the name for the pole with which they shove off the canoe. I cannot get the word for the paddle which is used after they have got into deep water to Row is to hurua go hurua Mokhoror or Mokoro - go hurua ka likañkashi may perhaps do the i final is distinctly sounded. Bara means to swim the people on the Lake are great swimmers - Lekaoe

is the name given to a sort of skiff plaited together
 & made of Reed - Licobobo & Litugiuana mean thicket very dense
 of both large & small trees - Mopakoana a curtain - a Kaross hung
 up to act as such - A dreamer of dreams is called Tlorolimpe
 ki gore torolimpe. Will that do for Prognosticator - Island is
 in Sekwaina Sekiri - Setlapized Seori Setlaka sa gare has always
 reed in it but a piece of land with trees on it in a stream is
 always sekiri or seori -seori can be applied to a promontory
 & so can setlaka sa gare but sekiri never. Koñkoñ an ignoramus
 (pelu pahu, I forget at present) Matlurra rough, so is Maguata
 Leposa to drawl in singing or go largely in walking But I
 must leave words. I am glad however of the opportunity
 to send out Kañkashi - As likewise a riding ox which had I
 been at home I should have sent by Boe. I have had it three
 years & it has grown large in my possession - It is very tame &
 is easy in riding so I think will just sent you It has some objection
 in its own mind to the stick being put into its nose but
 that operation over it is as docile as possible - the boys
 here chirp to him & he comes out of the kraal very familiarly turning
 his tail to them in order to enjoy what learned folks call titillation
 I hope you will be kind enough to accept it instead of your old one
 and whatever you may say think or do with it never think of
 returning it - A dear brother to whom I gave one returned it
 after it had got its thigh bone broken by telling his herd that ox
 belongs to Livingston - I have got a horse said to have been M^r
 Oswel's Of this I have doubts but it serves to get us eilands
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if it dies I can get another ox. So you need not imagine I put myself
 about by begging you to accept this - We had horus &c for you
 but all have been left at the Letlotleñ - It is now too late for
 seeds - Your melons will be grown before Koulter comes

We concieve M^rHume is done for here - M^r Evans sold a dog trap which
 I think I have seen in your garden for 30 or 40 lbs of ivory - He called
 it a wolf trap - The first time a wolf got into it the animal ~~shaked~~[shook] it
 to pieces - I suspect Evans did not tell this when mentioning
 how Sechele tried to cheat him. We try to obviate the objections
 which rise up in the heathen mind by such deeds by admitting
 that there are bad ones among us - At present they have a
 high opinion of the integrity of missionaries & we hope we
 my be assisted to walk so as to maintain a consistency of
 character. The pans you gave me have furnished us
 with sheep since we came. We have had eilands too and being
 very fat tried to salt for you but all went bad so you
 must take the veill instead of good Sehuba - Buffaloes
 come occasionally into the town. Two came down our
 way one morning & we soon made them our own
 We took a claw hammer of yours by mistake & in using it
 a few days ago knocked its head off. This is the only article
 I know of which should not have come. The reason I used
 it after knowing it was yours was it had a smoother face than

mine & did not cause the nails to bend so as the others

I find on application to Koulter that he has no loose oxen
And Apie's party have so we shall send the ox with the
latter. The party with whom Apie now is will probably
be here next week. Sechele has been down to desire me
to send you many humerishos - Also to all his Friends among
whom he considers M^r Ashton - He is anxious for some
one to make gun stocks for him, many of the guns of his
people being much damaged & split - Some one he calls
Taote esiü moreki has sent messages to him to the effect
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that he wishes employment in that line - He offers an ox & Kaross for
each - Our people say it is one David Dickop at Likatlong
I promised to mention it to you and that you would mention it
to the individual if at Kuruman

In riding over here from Chonuane I had the misfortune to
lose the stopper of my powder horn - could you lend me an
old one till I get one of my own.? I am now without any.
When we came here. Sechele has all his powder (about 100lbs)
in his tent. The tent was smeared with fat to make it impervious
the floor was covered with dried grass and as he always
uses candles in the evenings. The candle stick usually
stood at the head of his bed - After drinking beer one evening
he & all his attendants got up and went with the Kotla leaving
the candle burning. The wind blew it over on to the grass.
& when the flame ran up the tent it was observed - One of my
guns being in the tent. S. ran in & snatched it up - as he pushed
back the flaming tent with one hand it was severely burned
The tent was completely consumed but the powder remained
untouched it being covered over by some paties. All agreed
it was a great deliverance We do not know when
we shall attain a supply of that article. We do not look for Cumming
although he has left some ivory with us. He has a Hottentot
woman with him. Got two Bakwains to accompany him
one of these having gone out to hunt with him was threatened
with being shot if he did not find a buffaloes spoor - the
man becoming afraid pointed out the direction in
which he believed the animal went but Cumming
insisted it had gone another way. He then shot one of
his own dogs. told the man he should do so to him - the
latter again pointed out the direction in which the buffalo
went Cumming seized him by the throat - beat him with
his fists - kicked him on the abdomen & then knocked him
down with the but end of his gun - this made the blood spout
out from his nose & mouth. The two were alone in the field
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A few days afterwards he ordered the Bakwains to let his horses & cattle
alone. He then ordered one of his Hottentots to tend them - a horse
very soon fell into a lemena - Cumming seized a molala

in the belief that he had digged the pit, one of his Hottentots held him by the feet and another by the head & Cumming beat him till he expired - I asked the man particularly whether he saw the man was actually gonogile - He said it was midday when the deed was done. The corpse lay there till the evening and then some of the man's friends came & took it away to bury it. All the people fled when they saw the man actually dead - the Bakwains fled after nightfall - Cumming has gone on telling the natives he is going to his friend Mosilikatze - the boors have lately attacked some of his outposts and having found he the Matibele of a different metal from the Bechuana fought and ran away - hoping no doubt to live and fight another day they say they are returning to ipakauya so say the natives Cumming does not know of this - If he comes near the Matibele ten to one if he returns - If he should it will be a marvel to me - Donovan's party died at the Macapo or Bacapo - Cumming was South East of them when they (the Bakwains) left him. He seems driven away in his wickedness.

We have been to measure our watercourse today. Had we time we could irrigate a large tract of land but we should require to go along a mar of boulders about 200 feet - We prefer to make an effort for a smaller piece because it can be accomplished soon. And if spared & find that too small we shall try the larger on a future occasion Immense tracts may be irrigated down below easily - We hope the Bakwains may irrigate for themselves - and they profer willing enough to try when they see how we succeed
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3^d sheet

completely disgusting the Motloa a small white ant very troublesome If the climb up a wall or tree a little of the compound put on the path - they never think of going that way again we have not yet tried the white ant Masetlaoka with it I shall enclose leaves of it & the Mehetolo

1314 Sechele sent his brother [^][today] with the request that I should give him assistance to establish an evening prayer meeting in his house - thinking he meant a private one [^][with himself] I said he ought to pray himself in secret But going up this afternoon in order to encourage him to do so He took me aside and told me he wished to have a social prayer meeting in his own house of his children and all connected with them He added he knew he was living in sin but though he had not given up those with whom he sinned he wished to pray in his family & hoped that some of his people would be brought to believe - As he told

me before that he always prays in secret he said I do not give up that. I pray alone in secret - in the field & in the town. Paul & I began & we have arranged that one of us go every evening - always when affected His eyes glisten We wish it [^][may] be the beginning of conversion - His eyes glistened -tonight I suppose you remember when you caught it such little things as these. It will be a hard trail to part with his wives - Three of them are decidedly the best scholars - the most friendly. the best in everything of all the ~~people of~~[women in] the Town His love for reading is really striking He has read all our books twice - He is now in the Psalms - the second reading of the testament No one ever goes up without being requested to give him a lesson & he never tires of either reading or explanation|-When Malhuire or Macuire was here - he & his party spoke in the most [0010]

4 Sheet

regret parting with your old assistant. I mean he of captivity notoriety - Perhaps I too shall be honoured with "diversive vile" but I feel in the path of duty when I devote a week or two of relaxation to the Eastern tribes. I hope Jesus is my shield and with that hope & the path of duty before me I am not the metal to cower or turn tail at a boerish storm. I should like Mary to come too but she is sick of waggon life. It has been hurry scurry ever since we came. I feel very languid & think a trip will do good. I have longed to visit the Eastern tribes for a long time but have been bound hand & foot here - It is reported we shall have a visit from Potgeiter - perhaps I may induce him to stay where he is. Robert is rather a consequential sort of gentleman, He wont even bestow a look on the chief and if any of the people presume to salute him [^][by touching him] he either walks past [^][scornfully] or lifts up a stick to keep them at a distance - you might see him lifting up a stick to those he could not strike above the knee; yet he roars out murder if a kid looks at him. Seems to like English better than Sichuana and is very fond of his little sister. She is equally delighted with him - Both are favoured with good health - When we ask where Grandpapa is he points southward but I think he has but little recollection of Kuruman now.

My Brother Charles will have finished at Oberlin by next year is desirous [I should]to write the Directors & introduce him as a candidate for China - Is "engaged" to a young New Englander who is very anxious to go as a missionary. He does not like the American board on account of its connection with slavery - Another society has sprung up which does not recieve slaveholders money this he would join but it will not be strong enough by the time he has completed his course - I never advised him to

become a missionary, but when I recieved a letter
which I sent you I proposed to him to think of China
If I had that letter I should send that as an introduction but
it has gone out of the way. All I can do now is give
the Directors a little of his history and if they like they
may proceed to examine him as to capability &c as
in any other case. But poor fellow He is unmercifully
poor, and how can he come to London as a candidate
He writes us from Lafayette where he was keeping a
school during the vacation & lodging in a baptist minister's
house - It is to be hoped our good folks will send
[0011]
him our £80 since they do not emigrate themselves but
probably the dearth has eaten it up

Did your a[u]stralian seeds vegetate? one of my English
seeds have come up except Canteloupe & prize melons &
Prickly cucumber. Some of Jeffrie's have come to the
surface. We have sandy soil on the surface but
a peculiar sort of clay forms a stratum which has about
a foot below and in some places is at the surface
The water from the canal runs through the sand along
the clay & in several parts comes up to the surface -
Where the sand is a foot in depth everything grows
beautifully but where the clay appears grass chokes
other vegetation & water stands for some time after
every shower. It needs but little irrigation - I intend
to try what boring a hole through the clay to perhaps
a lower stratum of sand will do. This lower
stratum does exist in some parts I do not know
whether it is universal - We gave a small room
door to the Town house - It gave so much satisfaction
that a novel idea was originated Rhinoceros not
infrequently come by mistake rushing through the
town two came lately & an attempt was made to
skin one entire & stretch it out for a front door
but it would not do.

Manyetsa If I have taken anything by false accusation
as Gachecus said - It seems a compound of mano &
ya. eat bread of devet - Have you got this word out
your way Ga ki rue Khoma manyetsa is the way
it is used as if one should say I do not live by devet
Ñaro is past the thing But I am now very
sleepy. If I have forgot anything you mentioned
I shall advert to it again on reperusal of your
letter Kind love to Mamary when she comes
also to M^r Hamilton & Ashton's We remember
then all kindly though we do not write at
present All here are well
[0012]

I shall try & find a little Strychnia for Andries tomorrow morning before Boe goes. We send nothing now because our own waggon will soon go - 16th the Strychnia of a grain once or twice a day untill he feels the muscles of his back twitching - If this effect is not produced in a week three times a day will be the dose. If Boe remains half an hour I shall mark it up in pills in each - I know you have no time.

the leaves of the Ant medicine are dry & crumble now - the enclosed is Mehetolo - There is another plant which dyes the teeth black.

Affectionately yours

DLivingston
[0013]

[Livingston 29 Sept
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Contains some words
to be referred to]
Rev^dR. Moffat
Kuruman

[0014]

bitter manner against the gospel. "Why have you a house of instruction in your town?" that is a dwelling house said I. But I have heard you built a school. "You heard truly-" Then your town is done for. We shall get all your people to be servants & you will be left with your book in a leshupi, Metse o sengogele nure. Is the town gone send Ra chose. Ecoa o sengegele gale, o sencoe o phatlalaricoe ki mekhoa ca bagologolu ba roua- Yana ga gona metse. Sechele told me that the words of Macuire were more bitter than anything he could have conceived but he was only concerned lest some of his people should believe them some said he who do not understand. He soundly denied the existence of God. We had been on our previous picture night on the Magicians of Pharoah ~~through~~[throwing] down their rods as it is rather a familiar meeting. We were assailed by the question "How could they do that?" I related a story you may remember as having happened at the time of the reformation as St. Andrews or perhaps Melrose Abbey - of a pretended cure of a blind man, & asked how could they do that? It was of course a poser, the explanation of that & a few other tricks of jugglery awakened breatheless attention on succeeding sabbath our attention was directed to the [characteristics] gospel of which Paul spoke so positively - If we as an angel & and

then in the evening the Baruti of tsieco - After Macuire came Sechele said to me Here is a mopero feti oa tsieco and after telling some of his foolish sayings asked me in the hearing of a great number of his people "If Macuire had been alive when Jesus was in the world would he not have been Juda Isekanota? the party came in a very suspicious manner - We believed they came for plunder - they wished to remain on the opposite side of the stream but Sechele insisted on their coming into the town - thier horses were becoming sick dying yet they lingered always appointing a day for [0015] departure & yet remaining. then came your packet and as the report you sent agreed exactly with appearances I went up though it was night & put the Bakwains on guard About 80 guns were washed in the morning. the discharging of these frightened Macuire's people sadly Sechele then sent for Macuire & asked what harm he had done him that he had come waiting for an opportunity to steal his cattle. Add me if you want to do it. begin new. Macuire of course denied any evil intention, except that of going on to some tribe beyond the Bamangwato & stealing what he could get He was then asked & what evil have the tribes beyond the Bamangwato, done you. You are still eating Sebegoes cattle He replied he wished to buy a wagon & live independant of game flesh entirely - Plunder was evidently his object but fear operated to prevent him getting any. the Mauketse wished to surround him & his party at night & cut them off But Fosiencu prevented that - He who went out to plunder was within a little of leaving his bones among us We thank him who watched over us & shielded us from harm. Very probably the fear which prevented the accomplishment of their purposes was imparted by Him whose existence they denied

Sorry to hear Robert comes out without finishing his course of study at College But we hope almost against hope that he may have been permitted to remain - Pity he listens to the foolish advice of D^r Anandale - No degree is ever granted by University college of M D unless the candidate is a graduate in medicine or surgery of some other college (recognized by them) and has passed two years subsequently to the taking of that degree in an hospital or in public practice of his profession [0016]

If his head is affected by the racking of a winter session - the summer ought to be spent in preparation for the next one or two medical classes might be attended for profitable exercise but the main attention ought to be directed to lessening the labour of the coming session - the books to be read

are well known so there is no difficulty in preparation
However it may all turn out for the best yet
Sechele desires me to write for a testament of the imitation Russia
a brownish colour. Perhaps a few of the finer testaments
may be sent by the next opportunity - We have more of any
sort & may need them before very long. We were quite
in need of the selections before Boe came. and are glad
of them Sechele wishes me to mention a testament
& selection bound together but I have the impression
that you parted with all these - Also to ask if you have
forgotten the umbrella of which you spoke by Siloishoe
We left a tripod intended for him - Also all the pictures
we selected from your stock Isaiah is certainly
an improvement on Proverbs - I feel sorry in reading
the prop[h]et that you did not spend more time on the Proverbs
Isia has many new words at least new to me
I have not yet tried them but will do so in my Eastern
trip - Potlaka is so common here it seems preferable
to akotsa in He that believeth shall not make haste - It
means to hurry one or be in a hurry - Perhaps my love for it
arises from the meaning they attached to akohu
To Bakwains it means "come hither" again & again have
I called to a man working akoha be quick as I thought
but he would leave off immediately & run to me
I have not the smallest doubt but your Isaiah will bear
comparison with any one in the country - the fewness of
the typographical errors make & we think you do not