

Letter to Robert Moffat 1, 20 March 1851

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org)

[0001]

Kolobeng 20th March 1851

My Dear Father

Hendrick the son of Paul called this evening to inform us of his intention to proceed towards Kuruman on monday next. This is the first opportunity we have had since our return to Kolobeng. We met Moyle at the great Choai but did not remain anytime with him His statements as to the manner of poor Robinson's death are not uniform but it would appear to have been an attack of cramp rather than the odious hug of an alligator. He was the only spectator and they were not on good terms so Moyle would not be sorry to have the whole immense stock of arms & ammunition at his own disposal. the discrepancy to which I refer was having told Wilson, Robinson only gave a moan and gradually sunk. To me he said 'He uttered a horrid shriek or roar. How futile Gov^t regulations are. they had more powder &c. than they could take in & had to leave a large quantity at a Kalihari village beyond the Bamangwato and still more in coming out for their next trip - besides selling 100lbs powder muskets &c to Wilson here.

Sentuhe pretended he was totally opposed to the Griquas assisting the Boers to plunder the English trader who was robbed near his place but when we came here we learned that Sechele had offered to repel them out of the country. To this Sentuhe would not assent because "I would have no one to fight for me in case of the Bakwains attacking me, after the [0002]

Griquas were expelled." they usually go on the principle that there is no truth in the country and perhaps they are not far wrong. Flomelau seemed to be doing pretty well in the midst of difficulties. I said I believe M^r Moffat had not time to write you. He replied - O he never does although I write to him - and would be very glad of an epistle occasionally.

Here we seem to have had plenty of rain but

the crops look more miserable than ever we saw them
the soil does not retain the moisture. Most of the
people look extremely wretched, and the dreary prospect
before them is enough to make them run away
Sechele thinks that the part [8 or 10 miles] higher up the Kolobeng
called Limaoe is a better location but most of the
people consider that he is quite mistaken. He offers
to build our house and Mebaloes without expense
if we go thither. But I have no heart to remove
anywhere, there being no encouragement as to
teaching and water. A movement must take place
some where by both us & them but I cannot see
it to be my duty to follow them in these circumstances
We shall try the North - being shut up to it. and
if spared may give them another trial at some
future time. If unsuccessful elsewhere the wise
ones who bestow any thought upon us will say
"Ah, just as we thought". "We knew it would be so"
If successful they will forget that they ever thought
about us. I have both hopes and fears. I question
whether any modern missionary has been situated so
[0003]
peculiarly as I am. And the model missionary has yet to
be born. So I have just to try and do what seems most for
the Divine glory and trust he will purify and accept my
service.

I suppose Robert is by this time with you. We have
not heard a syllable about you since we left. And we
have no news of any sort up here. S. Edwards brought
up a young man with him who can work well at the
forge. He comes professedly for birds. name Leland
Wilson is better but not yet quite well. Could not go
out for want of oxen. A letter came here for
me. M^r Wilson inclosed it in another and sent it
over to Hans Sedras son I saw him at Motito
but he did not deliver it. Perhaps he has forgot until
he saw you. there was a newspaper with it
Sam. brought one of the boxes for us from Philipolis
there was another but his waggon was laden up
to the tent. I have had a dream that you gave me
a hand saw. Is it one of those that come true?
Hope to receive a copy of Deuteronomy before we go.
the children are all pretty well. Mary is better than
when at Kuruman. Kind regards to you all
not forgetting Robert. He is surely with you now

Affectionately yours

D Livingston

Rev^d Robert Moffat Kuruman