

Letter to William Thompson, 12 October 1852

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[0001]

Kuruman 12.th October 1852

Rev^dW.Thompson[Copied]

My Dear Sir

Enclosed you will receive two documents which I doubt not will interest you and may be of use to you in your forthcoming work "History of the Cape Colony during the last ten years". Put down my name as a subscriber for five copies. In the mean time however you may publish Viljoen's letter in the Mail or Advertiser. It is pretty fair from one who has been an extensive dealer in gunpowder among the natives and who I have no doubt had a load of the same article, then, in his waggon for sale. This is the same individual too who bought several boys at the Lake in 1851. I shall copy one of Sechele's letters for you before I close this and if you thought proper you might send it on to the Directors. I have sent a copy of Sechele's letter and also one of Viljoen's to the British Resident Mr Green. And a letter explanatory of the documents as violations of the provisions of the treaty of the Commissioners. It is somewhat in the same strain as that sent through you to [0002]

the Lieutenant Governor which I hope you received, but I conclude in the following manner "In the hope that the communication of these facts may lead to the cessation of the violation [^][of the provisions of] of the treaty. And compensation for losses sustained by such violation" I am &c &c DL. Now I have not the smallest expectation of any compensation but I thought I ought to make the losses known to the proper authorities so that they may have no excuse if they pay no attention to them. And as the British Resident has two brothers now on a trading expedition to Sebitsane's country and they having lost considerable property in the plundering of my house and burning of Sechele's town - Their relays of cattle too were taken away - All which property is believed to belong to the British Resident himself. It is not unlikely but that he may claim compensation and should he get it I may come in for a share.

At any rate it will look better for him to make a noise about my property than about his brothers' alias his own. The Boers are on the watch for his brothers and Webb who are in the country beyond the Bamangwato. Indeed we heard by some hunters who came two days ago that the boers are waiting for the English gentlemen somewhere between the Bamangwato and the Zonga with laudable intention

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of plundering them. I don't want the English gentlemen to be killed but I am inclined to pray that they may be stripped to the buff and come out like those bashful blades who were told to tarry at Jericho. I am quite glad they have lost a good deal at Kolobeng, I am only afraid they don't get insulted enough to make them speak out when they come to the colony. I being one of the "Rebel maakers" and a fanatic withal. The only comfort that will be bestowed on me will be "served him right" But if some of the Devil's children be hustled then we shall have decentish boohoo. I added a private note to the British Resident giving the news so far as we have heard then of his brothers, their losses. The success of their trading at Sebitsane's and the probable plunder of all they have got etc making the picture quite plain. He wont need spectacles to see the boers hauling out the big tusks out of his brothers' waggon, will he? And if he says nothing sharp to the Boer Republic, it will be because M^r Commissioner Owen lays an embargo on everthing likely to disturb his country. So the mighty fuss about punishing Kreli has turned out a windbag. Well done Kreli! and you ye Fingoes remember Bothavebum sat. sap. The world is becoming worse I fear. The Pope at home and Sandillah and General Uithaalder abroad what next?

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Will you come to the dinner to Uithaalder? Of course he will get a dinner as well as Pretorius. The Gert Scholtz who was feasted at Natal with Pretorius was Commandant at the Kolobeng! He did not bury all the dead of his own party. And they are all now dreadfully exasperated at me. They say straight Sechele to shoot Boers and they will have my head yet. As I have still a little use for my head I am still on the look out here watching to see the path clear a head. And what think you is the drama in front. A party of boers waiting beyond the Bamangwato to plunder & perhaps kill a few Englishmen and at the same time two parties of natives on the look out to kill them. It will be a wonder if a boer escapes. When the path is clear then I shall have run for it. All is peace beyond. Some Griqua hunters

have approached the outposts of Mosilikatse and He sends a message to M^r Moffat "Why dont you come and see me, Be sure and come and bring a chair for me. All you told me (about the boers) [& fighting & killing] is true He wants to make peace with the Griquas &c. O how I wish I were away in my own country. Swampy boggy though to be.. The reasons which make me doubt whether I ought to draw anything for Mebaloe are the following and as you are fond [0005]

[2^d sheet] you may take it as part of the Bakwain mission. I mentioned to you that after three years consistent conduct and profession of faith in Christ I baptized Sechele on the first Sabbath of October 1848 In March or April 1849 it was discovered that he had had connection with one of his former wives whom in consequence of having a young child and no parents he had found impossible to send away with the others. He at once confessed his sin and added as an excuse that having been accustomed to her he had not at the time felt as if he were sinning by going to another man's wife. He professed much penitence entreating me not to cast him off & as he hoped to stand along with me before the throne of Jesus&. I cut him off from fellowship and as he entreated to be allowed to remain as a spectator only at the ordinance and I felt that I must not count him as an enemy, I acceded; to his request. He sat back from the spot where the few believers communicated on two or three occasions which occurred subsequently to his fall and his manner being no ways changed from what it had been [0006]

previously I indulged the hope that if he continued to walk uprightly for two or three years we might again recieve him. Immediately after his fall I wrote to the Directors about it knowing that they would sympathize with me in my sorrow, and I mentioned to them subsequently the fact of his walking consistently. I thought this was sufficient unless I had restated him again. But as soon as I heard of his conduct in the case of M^r Moyle as it seemed widely different from consistency, I wrote to the Directors a detailed account of the circumstances and stated that I now considered him an entire backslider though not an apostate. I was the more careful to give the facts of his case because they had some speeches made reference to his conversion, and some who did not of course know what I had written thought that I must still be

holding up Sechele to the Board as a convert
Well eight or ten months after Sechele was
cut off a worse affair came to light amongst
the young people belonging to the families of the
two native teachers Mebaloe and Paulviz. excessive
impunity and when I began to make enquiry I
found out that the teachers must have known
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of it and kept me in ignorance. This is a peculiarity
among Bechuana believers. They never will make known
the sins of their fellow believers and when anything
comes to light, then they quietly remark "O we knew
all about it long time ago" The wives of the teachers too
had been using enchantments. I felt very much vexed
to think I had been administering the ordinance to them
as consistent believers, and the whole town knowing
all the while what their conduct had been. Their number
being only seven I cut the whole off having had no ordinance
at all since. None of them even asked why they were
kept so, they seemed determined to act as if they
had never been guilty or as if they believed that I
knew nothing about it. Paul's family being notoriously
bad I requested him to leave but he did not go
Mebaloe however confessed to me before I went to
the Cape that they had done great harm to the cause
in fact, said he, we have spoiled the teaching at
Kolobeng. The Boers now have cleared out the
whole of them. I did not pay them anything
from the time I discovered their inconsistency but
Mebaloe having confessed his sin and also carried
on the school up to the time of the Boer's attack I may
perhaps without impropriety draw a years salary
for him. I have not yet however made up my mind
[0008]

There are always two sides to a story. Well the other side
is this. Ashton loquitur " Livingston cut off the whole
of the believers at Kolobeng because he had not moral
courage to cut off Sechele" And he receives the delinquents
into Kuruman church without asking a note of demission
according to the universal custom of the churches here
Then again he proposed to M^r Moffat to write a
joint letter to the Directors denouncing my falsehood
in holding up Sechele to the Directors as a convert
all the while knowing that he is an apostate". M^r
M. of course declined this. Now I am in a fix
if I haul him up for his remarks it will be
another quarrel such as took place nine years ago
when Edwards and Inglis took into their heads to
say I quarrelled with them and which [^][quarrel] the Directors
tell me now, still exists. If I let him alone and say
nothing then he will be sure that his remark about

my want of moral courage is correct. Shall I
brave the row, of the imputation. I feel inclined
to do the latter as requiring more courage than the
former. This will be "Jouk & let the jaw gang by"
But I am giving you letters equal in length to the
Times Newspaper and you give me ½ sheets. Take care
my friend. Old John Wylde is nothing to me if I open out
on you. Tell me some of your trials (omitting the
Brit.Quar one) And how you manage to overcome

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[3^d sheet] It is something to overcome oneself. I would not men-
-tion names above but to put down a blank would not
be treating you with any confidence and I cannot help
believing that you possess a great deal more prudence
than I ever did or ever will get hold of. In proof
of want of prudence I intend to begin tomorrow another
spell for the British Quarterly on the Caffre war. It is
high time that we speak out. We must pitch into them
it is infamous to see our Cape Government scraping
and bowing to the mobocracy of that cesspool called
Graham's Town - I have sketched out a grammar
but done nothing else except collecting words and
making notes (a very few on natural history) when
I think of it, it grows on me and seems a work
of a life time. And I suspect mine will not be
a long one. I cannot get over the idea that
complaining of one's ailments is old wifish yet
a pain in my chest I never felt before when
I exert myself to speak as loudly as I used to
do in preaching warns me that my days are few
In preaching in Sechuana which I do occasionally
I feel at home and speak much more loudly and
quickly than when gasping for words as much
as for breath & voice in Union Chapel. Will you
present my kind remembrances to D^r Abercrombie

[Grammar.]

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and ask him what he would recommend for a pain
apparently confined to the middle & upper lobes of the
left lung. I feel it only when I preach loudly
It continues half a day afterwards. I use sponging
the whole body. The chest in particular with cold
water but have not much inclination to use
medicines unless recommended by a judicious
old practitioner as he. The throat I am sorry to
say is not so much benefitted as I expected
There is no symptom of any disease whatever
in the lung. I feel nothing but the pain & a
feeling of weakness

Ye that you may not think me entirely
destitute of prudence I may mention that I have
remained here more than a month after my
wheel was repaired waiting till the boers have
got out of my way. They intend it is reported
as soon as they hear of my passing to send
a party on horseback after me and if I will
not come back they must kill me. I intend to
lighten the waggons of as much food as possible
and everything else except bare necessities and
then we shall have a run. I shall travel mostly
at night, keep well to the west and if I get
to Sekhomi's he will take care that they
[0011]

dont bring me back - (O diabolos you work hard for
your own). I feel a little ashamed at lingering here now
that I have no incumbrance but what can be expected
~~now~~[since]that I have become a worshipper of the goddess prudence
Tell Ralph that the miserable white poney is become fat
again and carries me about finely, he would not know
it now.

16th Have just heard that the Boers have stripped
Mosheu the Koranna of everything. See M^r Moffat's book
for an account of Mosheu- The Boers are reported
to be quarrelling among themselves. The widows
of those killed at Sechele's wont receive their
share of the plunder and curse Pretorius
bitterly because he pretended to be sick while
he sent their husbands on commando. Last
Sunday I preached 3 times and did not feel the
pain I have had for some time so you
need not think anything more about it
Ludorf is at Motito having fled from
his people. They too are flying. PhilipolisGriquas
are said to be stabbing each other through brandy
of course. I shall write to Directors by next
opportunity

Ever yours of course

DLivingston