

Letter to Catherine McRobert, 18 January 1846

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Written in haste so do not
criticize

Chonuane 18 Jan^y 1846

My Dear M^{rs} M^cRobert

A considerable time has elapsed since we had the pleasure of hearing from you. What is the matter, you certainly never were compelled to listen for months to the wearisome round of news, maka hela, of this country enough to make me pant with feverish desire for something from the world sick in order to realize the refreshment good news imparts. It is now a long time since we heard from the Kuruman side and all we hear from the natives they well characterize as lies only there is so little truth in public report here a native always begins by saying "there are no news. none at all We have heard a few lies only." And then beginning their story it is sure to be rumours of war - contentions between tribes or something so vague we can scarcely make head or tail of it. Why dont you write more frequently then? The Penny Post has made you all so expert in the use of the pen you have no excuse.

We heard last week from an authentic source that Sekhomi the chief of the BamangWerto had put a large party of Matibele to death. They came last year to reside with him and being dissatisfied with his government began to flee to a neighbouring chief when to prevent the whole following that example those who remained were indiscriminately massacred A little more than ten months ago Mosilikatze sent 23 men to the Bamangwerto for tribute. Sekhomi laid an ambushade for them and the poor fellows being hemmed in in a deep valley I well know were everyone cut off: A gentleman lately saw their bones. I do not wish to harrow up your feelings by these stories But when I mention the fact of the destruction of the men

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Mosilikatze and likewise that the Bamangwerto have

subsequently "lifted" some of that gentleman's cattle and no attempt has been made to punish them, I give you the information as evidence that Mosilikatze's power is on the wane. And we probably will be allowed to carry on our operations without any hindrance from him. He was once the great obstacle in the way of the evangelization of the interior. God in His providence has removed him out of the way and there is now every probability that this region will become the abode of righteousness and peace. A large tribe of Matibele or Joolarhs lives about 10 days East of Sechele they have fought three times with Mosilikatse and with more or less success each time. He is now at a great distance from us. And long may it remain so. He has too long been the cause of lamentation cursing & sorrow here. But I must return to the point for which I introduced the deeds of Sekhomi, viz, to give a deed of Mosheu of whom you may have read in either Mr Moffat's work or speeches. A village about 12 or 14 miles from Mabotsa was lately ransacked by a party of Korannas from the Vaal river. The whole of the cattle & goods of the people were swept off, and a few lives were lost. When the marauders reached their residence next to that of Mosheu, their horses & selves being all tired by the long journey (nearly 200 miles) Mosheu lost no time in ordering them to restore everything and as he is a man of authority among them they do not dare to refuse obedience to what Mosheu told them was the Divine will they made restitution for what they had stolen. And Mosheu calling on the owners of the cattle and goods delivered the whole into their hands. He would not even accept a present for what he had done

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I have heard the above particulars from the natives, I am not yet aware of the whole of the facts. But what a contrast to Sekhomi, I have conversed with Mosheu and found him a simple humble minded Christian. When I reproved Sekhomi for having murdered his brother he replied "But he killed me first" referring to the fact of his brother having broken allegiance. And rose up and went off to another part of the town. But afterwards enquiring whether it were true that I saw all who were dead alive still in existence, I replied yes & you will see your brother and stand to be judged by his side. He replied "maka hela" his only. Let your prayers be made without ceasing for conversion of these degraded Heathen.

Sechele the chief to whom we have transferred our labours is an intelligent man, and it is probable if allowed to dwell in peace will become both rich and powerful. You would be amused to see his royal highness Prince Al. & not he but a king stand up to his knees in water and two persons scrubbing his royal person all over. As a preliminary to his washing his wardrobe himself. It takes a whole day to wash an old red coat and a few other duds which if sold to a Jew in London would not realise 5/ His wives too are fond of European clothing. And as Mrs [...]
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instructed to mention. Anything which will make strong patchwork. If furnished by any of our friends you may assure them we shall take every pains to make their gifts of use in the course of Christ. For the labour paid by their gifts we shall endeavour to pay the carriage which is always considerable in this distant region. I have mentioned tools for the native teachers to M^r Whish, they are exceedingly valuable, the natives are all fond of working with them And as a few I have are too often lent the station is rather hard put to for mending sometimes I have bought all or nearly all those

Proceed with the instructions of [**A native tracker supported by Chris [...]*
Friends in Glasgow] M[...] he is furnished with the leading pa[...] in a sermon he makes a good addr[...] of it Love to M^r [...] Affectionately
DL.

Ralph Lindsay Esq^{re} has contributed £ 10..10 for another but I dont know anything about him Do you know him? does he intend to continue the sum? I am at a loss for want of proper information M^{rs} Philip only notified the simple fact and no more about it. If you know him I should like to hold some communication [...] any unless perfectly sure of their characters as also of [...] supports him David is [...] doing well