

Letter to Robert Moffat 1, 2 September 1848

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[0001]

Kolobeng, 2 Sept^r 1848

My Dear Father

By the recent arrival of Monye Mabile
we were favoured with communications from the South
and now by the arrival of Motseabona & party from the
Bamangwato we have an opportunity of returning
you thanks for your favours. We wrote lately
by Aron and have now but little to communicate
Monye Mabile brought 15 out of the 17 hiefers - one
he said had been killed by a wolf near to this & of the
others he could give no account whatever. The Bakwains
were of opinion that he had made away with both. I sent
him for the horns of that said to be killed by a wolf - he
brought a bone. of some animal or other but not being
a comparative anatomist I could only look at it
as a Motchuana does at the stars. I felt a little
angry at first but changed in feeling when I reflected that
I might have lost ten as M^r Ross did. and any harshness
on my part might have had a bad effect on his & other
minds & perhaps be the means of preventing their
salvation. He brought one of his own & two of the
principal men of the tribe here to intercede for
him by means of it. I declined receiving it but
deferred rewarding him till some future time. He was
apparently pleased to get off. and I am sure I am
pleased with your promptitude in procuring the
animals for us - We are out of debt in
so far as animals are concerned & have
placed four of the number to our original
[0002]

stock of ten. We have never been in want of milk
but our old stock is [in] need of an infusion of new
hands, or rather teats. - this country is favourable for us
in respect to cattle. If you receive any from
M^r Solomon for us please send them under Paul's
charge or some one else whom you have confidence
in..

The trees you sent were extremely acceptable. If
you could have spared a few more they would
have [^][been] equally prized. We have only two peach

trees now & no apricots. but we hope some
may come up. We have about 10 orange trees
two feet high. two olives. and a lot of this country
trees which we thought of engrafting but they have
not yet budded. Am sorry some of those you budded
have had the new branches knocked off - some
of the country trees we put in the ground with
out roots & it is said they will grow - We cannot
bud or engraft till next year. Do you steep your
tape in gum or what? The superb Claremont
carrots came up splendidly but a swarm of locusts
left their place a blank & we had sown all the
seed sent - Our river has dwindled down to
a dribbling rill & we fear if rain does not
come soon we shall [^][have] but a poor account
to give of corn - some is withered & will be useless
When we came [in August or July] last year it was a large
stream so we think its present insignificance
[0003]

may be attributed to the great drought of last year
We comfort ourselves by reflecting that at Chonuane
our state would have been worse for it is dried
up & Kolobeng according to the testimony of the
antients is the only stream in the Bakwain
country which never dries up entirely
We went last week to Lōe for recreation & health
to the children - spent four days in the field &
returned invigorated - The much talked of Lōe
is a circular pit in a sandstone rock. and
at present dry. around the margin are a number
of wide footsteps carved. thus apparently the
work of children. The "spoor" with one exception
goes into the pit. The exception is that of Matsiën
the former of the Bechuanas. As the story goes
he returned into it while men left it but the spoor
if intended to represent any thing shews the
opposite. They [the people] shew the old towns of the Bangwaketse
Bamangwato & Bakwains, Mashona[&c &c] & all the
Eastern tribes. The tradition seems to refer to
the splitting up of the people into different tribes
from Loe as the central population. The remains
of old towns shew them to have been very large
Mokhatla's men have just been to recieve
their gun. &c. The lock has been admirably done
I sometimes fail entirely in producing fire
from steel - do it over again & it does well
cannot understand the cause of failure in the
first instance Can you tell me?

[0004]

I have some horns for you - I missed the opportunity
for collecting seeds. The house engaged too much

of my attention & the man who usually does that sort of work for me & understands what we want being absent I held on expecting him till the season was past. Our beads too were at a low ebb. before the last supply arrived - I am at present collecting some of the heads of the game for you. Leaving the skin & under jaw entire - I think they will be interesting at home. Cumming intends to make an exhibition of his trophies in the Egyptian Hall London & make his fortune by them - Will the heads be acceptable as above.? I intend to put up a few in our lobby if Mary will give me leave. to ornament it for her.

Am sorry to hear M^{rs}M has been so much reduced by her journey. Thought her made of a piece of clay that would not wear out in a hurry. We do not like to hear her speaking about dying Better if she were saying Now all our children are away let us begin a new mission or something of that sort - Let us go forward. But you will perhaps say. poor fellow that, all he knows about it Wait till he feels the infirmities which creep on our frail bodies.. The complaint with which she is troubled will invariably if severe require depletion. No matter where the pain manifests itself. When more than usually severe. Immediate recourse to bloodletting & [0005] [2^d] & other depletory measures are required - there is a tendency to congestion & an irregular distribution of blood & she ought to think as little about her head as possible When the stomach is stimulated by food of an exciting quality a considerable quantity of blood is attracted to it & the spleen. The quantity is diminished in the brain & other organs - purgatives have the same effect in drawing blood to the bowels - the mind does not act well after a full meal as both blood & nervous energy are sent to the stomach. If one thinks much about stomach or any other organ too much nervous influence is transmitted to it & sometimes too much blood too. You need not be afraid to bleed if you observe fullness of system in connection with unusual pains in either head or any other part. habitual medication is not good in any case.

Monday Evening. Sechele sends you a khoodoo's head which was killed in the town this morning. It has too much grass in it but that can easily be remedied by wetting the skin again

I shall see what Motseabona can take tomorrow
he seems very willing to oblige but he may
not have much room. Have been
to cut some pieces of tough wood today for
ribs to the new waggon. After cutting up
[0006]

these we hope to build a smithy as our next
engagement - After Paul comes we hope
to itinerate somewhere. probably Eastward. Give
him our love if still with you. We are
living in the hope & belief that progress is being
made. Opposition exists but not towards us
It manifests itself in hatred to the gospel. Some
woman or other wished the lion which bit
me were here to finish me. but all are
civil We cannot detect a particle of
difference in the conduct of the mass of the
people - [towards us] which is a cause for gratitude -
they curse Sechele very bitterly - He says their
curses are such formerly he would not have
said a word to them - he would have shot
them instantly - The children are returning
to the schools. & the meetings are improving
We have appointed two to converse with the
chief in order to a report at next church
meeting. We should have been glad had
Paul been here for the sake of his
experience in such matters - I feel my
heart trembling when I think of the danger
of receiving one who may not be a
true believer or refusing one who is
[0007]

We need Divine direction & hope it may be granted to us
He mentioned his intention of calling his youngest
child Setefano in allusion to himself as wishing
to be (like him) the first follower of Jesus in this
country - Mosielele tried to get one of the wives
while she passed through his place on her way
to her own people. When she refused he issued
a new edict against going to chapel - Sechele
intends to send over an entreaty to him to allow
his people to attend if they wish it -

We feel surprised to hear of so many people leaving
the Kuruman. We could not credit reports which
came to us about so & so leaving but we now hear
that these persons have actually left and they predict
that many others will follow. What can be
the reason.? If in your place I should feel
inclined to look upon it as an indication
that I ought to leave too. How hard you work

for them, & every thing is supplied for them
that they need in the clothing department &c.
Are they not too well off? Here when I
do a little gun work (& between you & me I sometimes
do more harm than good to a lock) I am both
thanked & paid for it. We are both looked
on as benefactors - a general interest is felt
in our prosperity Now you having both the
means & ability to do a great deal more than
we seem to be left as if your value were
[0008]

unfelt. Do come in here & let us have a tour
among the Eastern tribes, and if after you have
seen their numbers. friendliness & need. and contrast
them with your present sphere. you can say.
you ought to remain where you are. I shall
be content to bear any epithet you choose to
put upon me.- I am quite aware of the extent
of the field you now occupy. & that the Kuruman
has always [since I knew it]given a poor idea of its greatness
but the people leaving so may render it
needful for you to go through the building
operations of a new station somewhere
else in your district. Now would it not
be well to look at other spheres before
you think of anything else - You may
think all this premature prejudged or something
else as bad as either but I think you will
not refuse me. credit for a sincere desire for
your honour & usefulness. A tour will
do your health good. you will get new
words for translation. &c &c. I hope
you may be guided by Him who cannot err

I felt glad to hear that you or rather M^{rs}M
had put a stop to the Patriot - It has of late
become excessively nauseous to me
[0009]

[3^d sheet] the filthy Quack advertisements stuck at the bottom
of some of the pages create an unpleasant feeling
in my mind every time I reach them - Holloway
a Jew I believe draws thousands of pounds annually
from the public purse by falsehood & the Editors of the
Patriot for the sake of a rather higher rate of
payment admit his lies into the news part of
the paper & thereby become the vehicles by which
a portion of the religious world too is drawn
into the vortex of deception. Life is in innum-
erable cases sacrificed every year by advertizing
quacks - I have thought many times of late
of proposing another paper instead of the Patriot

We should have been glad to hear how Robert has got on &c. but you are in the same state of ignorance as ourselves as to his movements You will of course let us know when you can how he succeeds & what the benefits he is likely to confer in his new sphere. Also of Betsy & Jane how they fare in England. I have no doubt but they will be provided for when or if it becomes known they need to be provided for

Our soap you may remember when looking over the account being sixpence per lb ought [0010] to be £1. instead of £2. Sechele was glad of his but having given the last box for an ox. we could only ask a better one this time as it was dearer soap. The animal is not worth /30 but we prefer to bear the loss of the difference to appearing to take a profit from him. I need the glue - both for joining & the house. The latter is unfinished inside. I am tired of it & leave the finishing to some other time. It is simply whitewashed I have not good locks.. Did you ever get the brace & bits from Birmingham which I requested you to order for me - mine went this way. & is now held by a rein

All the country news will be communicated by Motseabona. The Griquas are standing to the West of this high & dry on their way to the Lake. They can it is reported neither go backwards nor forwards & want for rains.

With love to M^{rs}M & Ann believe

me Affectionately yours

DLivingston
[0011]

Rev^dR Moffat
Kuruman

[0012]

Tuesday morning - As Motseabona cannot take either of the boxes we let them remain - He takes some horns for you. Three Rhinoceros or

~~four~~ one is 3 ft 1 ½ in in length - The longest Mohohu I ever saw. The Khoodo is Sechele for you. The pallalis need the bony part to be steeped in water & scraped in order to be pretty - You must tell me if I send too many of these things. I think they will be interesting to friends at home. The chief's brother brought a waterbuck's skin &c carefully prepared but it was an old animal & only one horn so I declined it