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Brethren: "how shall
they believe in him of whom
they have not heard?"

Robert Moffat

THE GOSPEL

AMONG

THE BECHUANAS,

AND OTHER

Tribes of Southern Africa.

By S. Ineatus Prime

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P R E F A C E.

THE labours and adventures of Robert Moffat, an English missionary, among the savage tribes of southern Africa, form one of the most striking chapters in the history of modern missions. His work has been read by thousands in this country as well as in England, and to bring some of its most interesting and instructive passages before the young, who might be deterred from the perusal of the larger volume, the following abridgment has been prepared.

That the noble, self-denying spirit of the intrepid Moffat may be awakened in the hearts of our children, and that many of them may devote themselves to the service

of God among the heathen, is the prayer of the author of this abridgment, who with the same desire has already given to the Sunday-school libraries, through the American Sunday-school Union, the life of the "Martyr Missionary."

The Rev. Robert Moffat was sent out by the London Missionary Society, in 1816, and has been in their service in South Africa about a quarter of a century. The missions in that part of the continent have been strengthened by the labours of other societies, and have been greatly blessed, so that the history of no missions in modern times affords more precious and remarkable evidence of the omnipotence of divine grace.

THE
GOSPEL AMONG THE BECHUANAS.



CHAPTER I.

Early Missionary Efforts in South Africa.

Two young men stood up together in Surrey Chapel, London, in the year 1816, and were set apart for the missionary work. One of them was named JOHN WILLIAMS. He went to the South Sea Islands, and was there the means of turning many of the pagans to righteousness; and, after a short career of great usefulness, he was murdered by the natives of an island to which he was attempting to carry the news of salvation. He has since been called "THE MARTYR MISSIONARY;" and his memoirs have been widely read among the books of the American Sunday-school Union.

The other young man was **ROBERT MOFFAT**, who went to Africa. His adventures there have attracted much attention, and the accounts which he has given of the triumphs of the gospel among the degraded people of that benighted continent, are among the most wonderful records of modern missions.

Before we enter upon the narrative of Moffat's labours, let us look at Africa as it is, and see what a field it opens for missionary efforts. There is no part of the world of which so little is known as of the interior of this continent. Many travellers have lost their lives in trying to explore it; and it is probable that the missionary, with the "lamp of life" in his hand, will penetrate its dark places before the traveller who goes with the torch of science, or the trader in search of gain.

Once this land was blessed with the light of the gospel. But long centuries of darkness have settled upon it. The sons and daughters of Africa have been carried captive into distant lands: her people have sunk into the lowest depths of mental and moral degradation; till now it would be impossible to find on the face of the earth a race of men who need the gospel more, or who are more incapable

of receiving it. Some of the African people are among the most debased of the human family.

The labours of Mr. Moffat were in South Africa, where the lowest specimens of the race may be found, and the peculiar beauty of the gospel of Christ appears in its power to change the hearts and the lives of men, even of Hottentots, whose savage and brutal habits seemed to place them almost beneath the human race, and in the rank of the beasts of the field.

The Moravians were the first to attempt a mission to the Hottentots. In 1736, George Schmidt left Germany, his native country, and raised the standard of the cross in the "Vale of Grace," as his first station in South Africa was called, and there pointed the poor, despised, and perishing natives to the Lamb of God. His labours were attended with success, and he had the joy of seeing some of these degraded people led, as he hoped, to the foot of the cross. The Dutch, at this time, had a colony at the Cape of Good Hope, and when the missionary was compelled to go home on a visit in 1743, the Dutch refused to permit him to return and resume his mission, lest the instruction of the natives should interfere with the avaricious designs of the colonists.

For fifty years no missionary was there. In 1792, three Moravians went out and found the spot where Schmidt had planted the seeds of divine truth. And they found some of the fruit! One old woman remembered the missionary, and produced a New Testament which he had given her. Others, who had heard of Schmidt, welcomed the new missionaries, and though their trials were many and great, the Lord blessed them, and their missions have prospered there to this day.

Dr. Vanderkemp landed at Cape Town, with two associates, in 1799; and leaving the colony, he penetrated into the interior, and took up his residence near to the Kafirs, a barbarous people, who looked upon him as a spy, and suspected that he had come to get possession of their land and cattle. These people had suffered so much from the Dutch farmers, that they regarded every white man as their enemy; and it is wonderful that they did not fall upon the missionary and put him to death. He carried nothing to recommend himself to them, nor any means of defence, and his appearance was not likely to make much impression on their minds. He went without hat, or shoes, or stockings, and trusted in God

and the truth to win his way to the hearts of the natives.

They wondered what brought him there, and one of them said to him, "Did this plan spring out of your own heart?" for they could not believe that a man would come there only to tell them of God and the way to escape the wrath to come. When at last Dr. Vanderkemp and his companions obtained permission to remain, they selected a spot and built a hut, which they thatched with grass and rushes. Dr. Vanderkemp was a learned and polished man; he had received honours in Europe for his progress in literature, in philosophy, divinity, physic, and the military art. He was not only a profound student in ancient languages, but in all the modern European tongues, even to that of the Highlanders of Scotland; and had distinguished himself in the armies of his country, in connection with which he rose to be captain of horse and lieutenant of the dragoon guards. Yet this man, constrained by the "love of Christ," could cheerfully lay aside all his honours, mingle with savages, bear their sneers and contumely, condescend to serve the meanest of his troublesome guests—take the axe, the

sickle, the spade, and the mattock—lie down on the place where dogs repose, and spend nights with his couch drenched with rain, the cold wind bringing his fragile house about his ears. Though annoyed by the nightly visits of hungry hyenas, sometimes destroying his sheep, and even seizing the leg of beef at his tent door,—though compelled to wander about in quest of lost cattle, and exposed to the perplexing and humbling caprice of those whose characters were stains on human nature—whisperings occasionally reaching his ears that murderous plans were in progress for his destruction—he calmly proceeded with his benevolent efforts, and to secure his object, would stoop with “the meekness of wisdom” to please and propitiate the rude and wayward children of the desert whom he sought to bless.

In the midst of all his discouragements, when he discovered the faintest image of his Lord and Master in a poor Hottentot or Kafir, he was enraptured. When told by a Hottentot woman that she incessantly prayed to Jesus to reveal himself to her, and teach her what she ought to know, his heart was filled with joy; and he adds, “I have prayed the Lord that it might please him to accompany

the unworthy efforts of his vile servant with the influences of his Spirit. And, oh, how did my soul rejoice that the Lord had given me, in this wilderness among tigers and wolves, and at such a distance from Christians, a poor heathen woman with whom I could converse confidently of the mysteries of the hidden communion with Christ. Oh, that I may not be deceived. Lo, my winter is past—the voice of the turtle is already heard in the land.”

Dr. Vanderkemp continued to reside among the Kafirs for some time, but was, by and by, compelled to retire, and labour with the Moravian missionaries among the Hottentots. He took a bold and decided stand in behalf of these natives against their white oppressors, and terminated a life of great devotion and usefulness in 1811, dying with these memorable words on his lips: “ALL IS WELL.”

In the year 1816, Mr. Joseph Williams, with his wife and child, took up his abode at the Kat river. Short as Dr. Vanderkemp's labours among the Kafirs were, he left a savour of the gospel behind him, which prepared the way for others, after many long years had rolled by, during which many of the Doctor's acquaintances had been taught, by

fearful lessons, not to admire the nation of whites, but rather to increase their suspicions and alarms. But Jankanna's (Vanderkemp's) name still diffused a fragrance among the yet untamed and unsubdued Kafirs.

Temporary houses were raised, ground was cleared for cultivation, a water-course and dam were in preparation, while the Kafirs assembled for daily instruction; and the beautiful vale which had often echoed to the din of savage war, was likely soon to become a peaceful Zion, to which the Kafir tribes would repair to hold their solemn feasts. Little more than two years had run their round when Williams was numbered with the dead. His beloved partner, a woman of no common fortitude, was his sole attendant in the lonely vale, and saw in her expiring husband the bright prospects they had of permanent success among the Kafirs, and into which she had entered with all her energies of mind and body, blasted for a season. About to be left with two fatherless babes, her circumstances were such as even her own pen would fail to describe; but the widow's God was there. After being enabled to resign her dearest earthly friend, she asked one of the Kafirs if he had "No

wish to see his teacher before the Lord took him to himself? 'Yes,' was his reply, 'but I do not like to ask you, because I think it will make your heart sore.' He then approached, and sat down by the bedside. I asked him if he prayed! 'Yes,' he said. And what do you pray for? 'I pray the Lord, as he had brought us a teacher over the great sea water, and hath thus long spared him to tell us His word, that He would be pleased to raise him up again to tell us more of that Great Word.' I asked, Do you pray for me? 'Yes; I pray that if the Lord should take away your husband from you, he would support and protect you and your little ones in the midst of this wild and barbarous people.'"

Cheerless and lonely must have been the first days of her widowhood. She instructed her semi-civilized attendants to prepare the wood, and make a coffin; and, with a weeping band, followed the desire of her eyes to the silent dust, there to slumber till the morning of the resurrection, when he who cuts short his work in righteousness, will show that Williams, in his short career, finished the work given him to do.

These are the beginnings of the missionary

work in South Africa. Those engaged in it were few and feeble, and often ready to perish ; but the God of missions watched over them, and other labourers, including those sent out by the Glasgow, the London, the Wesleyan, and American Missionary Societies, have entered those fields. The united efforts of these ardent men have already accomplished wonders there.



CHAPTER II.

The Bushmen of South Africa.

THE *Bushmen* in Southern Africa are a savage and degraded race of men, whose history and habits have been the subject of much difference of opinion among those who have come in contact with them. They are evidently the poorest and feeblest and most despised of all the sable descendants of Ham. When Dr. Vanderkemp went to Kafri-land, three missionaries, Messrs. Kicherer, Kramer, and Edwards took their way toward the Zak river, between four and five hundred miles north-east of the southern point of Africa. The circumstances that led them to this distant and unpromising field were remarkable, and showed the hand of God most clearly. It seems the Dutch Farmers, having suffered severely from the ravages of the Bushmen among their flocks and herds, had made a treaty with these barbarians. The Bushmen seeing Florus Fischer, who was a good man,

solemnly appeal to Almighty God to witness the transaction, and observing that he was in the habit of assembling his family for worship, morning and evening, were led to inquire into the Divine character, and to solicit a Christian teacher. Mr. Fischer cheerfully afforded encouragement ; and, though it appeared something like hoping against hope, he, at their request, took some of the principal of them to Cape Town for this purpose.

They arrived there just before the three missionaries reached Cape Town, a circumstance which left the latter no reason to doubt of being called of God to labour in that quarter. The brethren received unbounded kindness and attention from the government, and assistance from the farmers, who loaded them with things requisite to commence the station ; while some accompanied them to the spot they first selected, which they named "Happy Prospect." Here Messrs. Kicherer and Kramer laboured with primitive zeal and simplicity, to raise the most abject of our species ; and had not their faith been strong in the promises of God, they must have sunk under the very thought of making an attempt.

From this station on Zak river the mission-

aries looked farther on to other tribes and more distant regions ; to the Namaquas, the Carananas, the Griquas, and Bechuanas ; and from the accounts furnished by these missionaries, the civilized world became acquainted with the fact that these tribes inhabited those regions. The station at Zak river was abandoned in 1806, on account of the difficulty of sustaining the labourers in a sterile country, where rain seldom fell, and where it was necessary to depend on foreign supplies which were obtained only at great expense and with great difficulty. But the station was abandoned with painful regret. The missionaries had rejoiced in the conversion of a number of the degraded natives, who were afterwards greatly useful in the extension of the gospel.

It will be interesting, before we proceed, to give a more particular description of these Bushmen, who are considered by many to be the most ignorant and miserable people on the face of the earth.

They are originally Hottentots, and are to be found scattered, though thinly, among all the Bechuana tribes of the interior with which we are acquainted, even as far as the Mam-

poor lake, about eight hundred miles north of Lattakoo. The Marosa, or Baroa Bushmen, are found of the same description as those just beyond the boundaries of the colony; and from the oldest traditions we can find among the Corannas and Namaquas, who are the un-mixed Hottentots, as also from the Bechuanas, it may be demonstrated, that they existed a wandering people without homes, or cattle, or even nationality of character. That they descended from Hottentots, requires little argument to prove. Probably there are connected with all the tribes of Africa numbers of a nomadic character, whose origin will throw light on the history of the Bushmen. Connected with each of the towns among that people, there are great numbers of what are called "Balala," poor ones, who stand in the same relation to the Bechuanas in which the Bushmen formerly stood to the Hottentots, and whose origin was doubtless of the same nature. These Balala were once inhabitants of the towns, and have been permitted or appointed to live in country places for the purpose of procuring skins of wild animals, wild honey, and roots, for their respective chiefs. The number of these country residents was in-

creased, by the innate love of liberty, and the scarcity of food in towns, or within the boundaries to which they were confined by water and pasture. These again formed themselves into small communities, though of the most temporary character, their calling requiring migration, having no cattle of any description. Accustomed from infancy to the sweets of comparative liberty, which they vastly prefer to slavery in the settlements, they would make any sacrifice to please their often distant superiors, rather than be confined to the irksomeness of a town life. Such is their aversion, that chiefs sometimes take armed men, and travel a hundred miles into desert places, in order to bring back Balala, whom they wished to assist them in watching and harvesting the gardens of their wives; and in such seasons they will frequently wander about, and fix their domiciles in the most desert and unfrequented spots, to escape this easy, but to them galling duty, which is only required in a year of plenty.

Though in general they are able to state to what chief or tribe they belong, yet, from want of intercourse, and from desolating wars, which are only waged where there is a prospect of

plunder, great numbers of them become, in their isolated position, independent. They are never permitted to keep cattle, and are exposed to the caprice, cupidity, and tyranny of the town lords, whenever they happen to come in their way. They live a hungry life, being dependent on the chase, wild roots, berries, locusts, and indeed any thing eatable that comes within their reach; and when they have a more than usual supply, they will bury it in the earth, from their superiors, who are in the habit of taking what they please. Resistance on their part would be instantly avenged with the deadly javelin. When hunting parties go out to kill game, the Balala, men and women, are employed to carry grievous burdens of flesh to the rendezvous of the hunters; in return for which, they receive the offals of the meat, and are made drudges so long as the party remains. They are never permitted to wear the furs of foxes and other animals they obtain. The flesh they may eat; but the skins are conveyed to the towns, for which they obtain a small piece of tobacco, or an old spear or knife. Indeed, all the valuable skins of the larger animals, which they sometimes procure by hunting and pitfalls, as well as the

better portions of the meat, they have to yield to their nominal masters, except when they succeed in secreting the whole for their own use. From the famishing life to which they are exposed, their external appearance and stature are precisely to the Bechuanas what the Bushmen are to the Hottentots. Those, however, who live in places which afford a better supply of food, are generally of equal stature with those who live in towns. The natives, throughout southern Africa, are like plants on a sterile soil, stunted in growth, while under better circumstances the same race would be as trees instead of shrubs.

Mr. Moffat, from whom we have derived these facts, further says concerning these poor Bushmen: "They have neither house nor shed, neither flocks nor herds. Their most delightful home is 'afar in the desert,' the unfrequented mountain pass, or the secluded recesses of a cave or ravine. They remove from place to place, as convenience or necessity requires. The man takes his spear, and suspends his bow and quiver on his shoulder; while the woman frequently, in addition to the burden of a helpless infant, carries a mat, an earthen pot, a number of ostrich egg-shells

and a few ragged skins, bundled on her head or shoulder; and these Saabs, as they have been designated, bearing in their character a striking resemblance to the Sauneys, or Balala, (poor,) among the Bechuanas, have, with few exceptions, as already shown, been from time immemorial the sons of the field. Accustomed to a migratory life, and entirely dependent on the chase for a precarious subsistence, they have contracted habits which could scarcely be credited of human beings. These habits have by no means been improved by incessant conflict with their superior neighbours, who, regarding might as identical with right, kill their game, plunder their honey nests, seize upon their fountains, and deprive them of their country.

“Poor Bushman! thy hand has been against every one, and every one’s hand against thee. For generations past they have been hunted like partridges in the mountains. Deprived of what nature had made their own, they became desperate, wild, fierce, and indomitable in their habits. Hunger compels them to feed on every thing edible. Ixias, wild garlic, the core of aloes, gum of acacias, and several other plants and berries, some of which are

extremely unwholesome, constitute their fruits of the field ; while almost every kind of living creature is eagerly devoured, lizards, locusts, and grasshoppers not excepted. The poisonous, as well as innoxious serpents, they roast and eat. They cut off the head of the former, which they dissect, and carefully extract the bags, or reservoirs of poison, which communicate with the fangs of the upper jaw. They mingle it with the milky juice of the euphorbia, or with that of a poisonous bulb. After simmering for some time on a slow fire, it acquires the consistency of wax, with which they cover the points of their arrows.

“ Though the natives of South Africa have an aversion to fish, the Bushmen in the neighbourhood of rivers make very ingenious baskets, which they place between stones, in the centre of a current, and thus they sometimes procure a fry of fish, which in their frequent necessity must be acceptable. They ascend the mountain’s brow or peak, and, with an acuteness of sight perhaps superior to our common telescopes, survey the plains beneath, either to discover game or cattle, or to watch the movements of those whose herds they may have stolen. If danger approaches, they as-

pend almost inaccessible cliffs, from which nothing but the rifle ball could dislodge them. When closely pursued, they will take refuge in dens and caves, in which their enemies have sometimes smothered scores to death, blocking up the entrances with brushwood, and setting it on fire.

“One characteristic in their plundering expeditions is exceedingly provoking. When they have taken a troop of cattle, their first object is to escape to a rendezvous, a cave or an overhanging precipice, or some sequestered spot difficult of access to strangers for want of water. As soon as they perceive that any of the cattle are too fatigued to proceed, they stab them; and if the pursuers come within sight, and there is the slightest probability of their being overtaken, they will thrust their spears, if time permit, into every animal in the troop. I have known sixty head levelled in this way. This habit, which obtains universally among that unfortunate people, exasperates their enemies to the last degree, and vengeance falls on men, women, and children, whenever they come within reach of their missiles. Though their poisoned arrows cannot take in one-third of the length of a musket-

shot, they aim with great precision. I have known men shot dead on the spot with poisoned arrows, and others who did not at first appear to be mortally wounded, I have seen die in convulsive agony in a few hours.

It is impossible to look at some of their domiciles, without the inquiry involuntarily rising in the mind—are these the abodes of human beings? In a bushy country, they will form a hollow in a central position, and bring the branches together over the head. Here the man, his wife, and probably a child or two, lie huddled in a heap, on a little grass, in a hollow spot, not larger than an ostrich's nest. Where bushes are scarce, they form a hollow under the edge of a rock, covering it partially with reeds or grass, and they are often to be found in fissures and caves of the mountains. When they have abundance of meat, they do nothing but gorge and sleep, dance and sing, till their stock is exhausted. But hunger, that imperious master, soon drives them to the chase. It is astonishing to what a distance they will run in pursuit of the animal which has received the fatal arrow. I have seen them, on the successful return of a hunting party, the merriest of the merry, exhibiting bursts of en-

thusiastic joy ; while their momentary happiness, contrasted with their real condition, produced on my mind the deepest sorrow. Many suffer great distress when the weather is cold and rainy, during which not unfrequently their children perish from hunger. A most inhuman practice also prevails among them, that when a mother dies, whose infant is not able to shift for itself, it is, without any ceremony, buried alive with the corpse of its mother."

Mr. Moffat had a boy brought up in his own house, who was thus rescued from his mother's grave, when only two years old.

To the above melancholy description, may be added the testimony of Mr. Kicherer, whose circumstances, while living among them, afforded abundant opportunities of becoming intimately acquainted with their real condition.

"Their manner of life is extremely wretched and disgusting. They delight to besmear their bodies with the fat of animals, mingled with ochre, and sometimes with grime. They are utter strangers to cleanliness, as they never wash their bodies, but suffer the dirt to accumulate, so that it will hang a considerable length from their elbows. Their huts are

formed by digging a hole in the earth about three feet deep, and then making a roof of reeds, which is, however, insufficient to keep off the rains. Here they lie close together, like pigs in a sty. They are extremely lazy, so that nothing will rouse them to action but excessive hunger. They will continue several days together without food, rather than be at the pains of procuring it. When compelled to sally forth for prey, they are dexterous at destroying the various beasts which abound in the country; and they can run almost as well as a horse. They are total strangers to domestic happiness. The men have several wives, but conjugal affection is little known. They take no great care of their children, and never correct them except in a fit of rage, when they almost kill them by severe usage. In a quarrel between father and mother, or the several wives of a husband, the defeated party wreaks his or her vengeance on the child of the conqueror, which in general loses its life. Tame Hottentots seldom destroy their children, except in a fit of passion; but the Bushmen will kill their children without remorse, on various occasions: as when they are ill-shaped, when they are in want of food, when the father of a

child has forsaken its mother, or when obliged to flee from the farmers or others; in which case they will strangle them, smother them, cast them away in the desert, or bury them alive. There are instances of parents throwing their tender offspring to the hungry lion, who stands roaring before their cavern, refusing to depart till some peace-offering be made to him. In general, their children cease to be the objects of a mother's care as soon as they are able to crawl about in the field. In some few instances, however, you meet with a spark of natural affection, which places them on a level with the brute creation."

Oh the miseries to which human nature is heir! Hard is the Bushman's lot. Friendless, forsaken, an outcast from the world, greatly preferring the company of the beasts of prey to that of civilized man; he takes his GORAH, a piece of catgut stretched on a bow, and by strong effort with his breath, produces a few soft notes of music, which soothe his solitary hours, although its sounds are often responded to by the lion's roar, or the hyena's howl. He knows no God, knows nothing of eternity, yet dreads death; and has no shrine at which he leaves his cares or sorrows. We can

scarcely conceive of human beings descending lower in the scale of ignorance and vice ; while yet there can be no question that they are children of one common parent with ourselves ; and if, during a period of some thousands of years, they have sunk thus low, what would the world become if left without Divine revelation, to grope in the mazes of heathen darkness ? But, degraded as the Bushmen really are, they can be kind, and hospitable too ; faithful to their charge, grateful for favours, and susceptible of kindness. It is habitual with them, on receiving the smallest portion of food, to divide it with their friends ; and generally it is observed the one who first receives the boon, retains the least for himself ; and a hungry mother will not unfrequently give what she may receive to her emaciated children, without tasting it herself.

In order to get the people to congregate, Mr. Kicherer found it necessary to give them daily a little food, and especially small portions of tobacco, with which he was most liberally supplied by the farmers. "Without that," he says, "it would have been impossible to bring these poor people to any means of instruction, as they are compelled continually

to go from one place to another for food." While, however, the message of Divine mercy at times made an impression so great that the missionaries were led to suppose that they had surmounted every difficulty, they were again humbled and grieved to see (as they expressed it) the natural inconstancy of the Bushmen reverse every promising sign.

The Directors of the London Missionary Society, most anxious to impart to this degraded portion of the human family the means of grace, recommended the establishment of a station for that object at Toornberg, now Colesberg, south of the Great River; and Mr. Erasmus Smith and Mr. Corner went thither in 1814, when about 500 Bushmen took up their abode with them. The missionaries were thus cheered by a people waiting to receive them; but their joy was of short duration. A long and mortal enmity had existed between the Bushmen and the farmers; and they soon began to suspect that the missionaries were employed only as instruments to betray them into their hands. Groundless as this suspicion was, it nevertheless so operated for a while as to damp the zeal of the missionaries. They very naturally expected that it would

require a long and laborious course of culture and tuition before such pupils could be expected even to apprehend the doctrines of Christianity. This, however, was not the case. The light and power of the gospel, at an early period of the mission, accompanied the proclamation of its glad tidings, and a number of these barbarous people, when they heard the word of life, believed. And here a Christian church arose, extensive gardens were laid out, and these were cultivated with the Bushmen's own hands.

Another mission was commenced among that people at Hephzibah, where there was a prospect of permanent success. It was, however, found extremely difficult, from the Bushmen coming into unpleasant contact with the farmers in their vicinity, and the missionaries being brought into collision on their account. These evils, to which their locality exposed them, soon proved the means of blasting their pleasing hopes among that people. An order was received from the Cape authorities, requiring the missionaries to retire within the colony. Thus ceased the operations of the Society among the poor wild Bushmen at these stations; and it is impossible to read the

following extract of a letter to the Rev. Dr. Philip, from the Rev. A. Faure, then minister of Graaff Reinet, without deeply lamenting, with that enlightened individual, that these stations should have been broken up.

“Some of the Bushmen whom Mr. Smith baptized had acquired very rational ideas of the principles of the Christian religion; and appeared to feel its constraining influence on their habitual conduct. They were zealous in trying to convey the same inestimable blessing to their unhappy countrymen, who live without God and without hope in the world. It was delightful to hear the children sing the praises of Jehovah, and to witness the progress they had made in spelling and reading. These facts, which have come under my own observation, prove that the conversion of this race of immortal beings is not impossible.”

The last effort of the Society to establish a mission among that people, was attempted in the vicinity of the Caledon river. Captain A. Kok, the late chief of Philippolis, most munificently presented the Bushmen who congregated at that place with a good supply of cattle, sheep, and goats. This mission, now

called Bethulie, was afterwards transferred by Dr. Philip to the Paris Society, and it has since become a Bechuana mission, where the gospel has had great success.

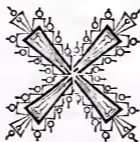
The history of the missions among the Bushmen is an important lesson. It shows that the most stupid and brutal people on earth may be reached by the gospel, and brought to the feet of Christ.

An instance of the power of kindness to melt the heart is here mentioned by Mr. Moffat: "I know," says he, "an individual who was struck with the difficulties the Bushwomen had in rearing their infants after the season of suckling, from the entire absence of any thing in the shape of milk or grain. Dried meat, or ixia bulbs, is hard fare for a babe. He tried to persuade them to purchase (milch) goats, with ostrich feathers, or skins of game procured in the chase. At this proposal they laughed inordinately, asking him if ever their forefathers kept cattle; intimating, that they were not intended to *keep*, but to eat, as their progenitors had always done. He recommended the plan to all who happened to come in his way, but with no better success. It at last occurred to his mind to present some of

the principal individuals among them with a few goats a piece. This he did, promising that, if they took good care of them for a given time, he would add to their number, and make them their own. This proposal, though to them scarcely to be believed, went to their hearts; and the very looks of the men, and the grateful gesticulations of the women, were felt by the missionary as a rich reward. His anticipations were fully realized. They allowed their little flocks to increase, and even took some trouble to make additions by barter; and it was no uncommon thing to see several of these resorting to the house of prayer on Sabbath days, though their homes were many miles distant."

The young reader will be amused with a description of their mode of catching the ostrich. The Bushman dresses himself up with feathers, to look as nearly as possible like the bird. A cushion is stuffed with straw, and covered with feathers; the neck and head of an ostrich are fastened to this cushion, which is then placed on the shoulders of the Bushman, who whitens his legs, takes his bow and poisoned arrows, and sets out in pursuit. At a few hundred yards distant it is not possible

for the human eye to detect the fraud. This *human* bird appears to pick away at the verdure, turning the head as if keeping a sharp look-out, shakes his feathers, now walks, and then trots, till he gets within bow-shot, when he draws with certain aim on one of the flock ; as they flee from the wounded bird he runs too. The male ostrich will on some occasions give chase to the strange bird, when he tries to elude them, in a way to prevent their catching his scent ; for when once they do, the spell is broken, and no sooner is the fraud discovered, than they all flee beyond his reach, and far beyond his pursuit. Should one happen to get too near in pursuit, he can only run to the windward, or throw off his saddle, to avoid a stroke from a wing which would lay him prostrate.



CHAPTER III.

The Story of Africaner.

ON the map of Africa, a short distance above the Cape of Good Hope, the reader will see the Orange river emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. In 1806, the missionaries of the London Missionary Society crossed that river, to carry the gospel to the miserable dwellers in that wild and desolate region. The people were Hottentots, and in many respects were like those we have already described. They had had no intercourse with white men, whom they called *Hat-wearers*, except such as came among them to plunder them, and therefore they looked on all white men as they did upon wild beasts.

The missionaries suffered great hardships on the journey to this region, and when at last they pitched their tents for a temporary residence, they named the spot "Silent Hope;" and when they had found another place that promised to be more permanent, they called it "Happy Deliverance."

In this region lived a most noted robber by the name of AFRICANER, who was the terror of all the surrounding country. The history of this robber is wonderful, and deserves to be recorded as signal among the triumphs of the gospel over the most abandoned and wicked men. If so cruel, savage, and wicked a man as this robber, can be made a meek, humble, and devoted friend of Christ, what may not the gospel effect in the conversion of men. A memoir of Africaner is published by the American Sunday-school Union, but we will nevertheless give the leading points of his history in the present place.

Jager (afterwards Christian Africaner) and his father once roamed on their native hills and dales, within 100 miles of Cape Town; pastured their own flocks, killed their own game, drank of their own streams, and mingled the music of their heathen songs with the winds which burst over the Witsemberg and Winterhoek mountains, once the strongholds of his clan. As the Dutch settlers increased, and made room for themselves, by adopting as their own the lands which lay beyond them, those of the Hottentots, (the aborigines,) incapable of maintaining their ground against these

foreign intruders, were compelled to give place by removing to a distance, or yielding themselves in passive obedience to the farmers. From time to time he found himself and his people becoming more remote from the land of their forefathers, till he became united and subject to a farmer named P——. Here he and his diminished clan lived for a number of years. In Africaner, P—— found a faithful and intrepid shepherd; his valour in defending and increasing the herds and flocks of his master enhanced his value, and at the same time it matured habits and principles which afterwards recoiled on that devoted family, and carried devastation to whatever quarter he directed his steps. Had P—— treated his subjects with common humanity, not to say with gratitude, he might have died honourably, and prevented the catastrophe which befel the family, and the train of robbery, crime, and bloodshed which quickly followed that melancholy event. But at last, exasperated by ill usage, and determined on freedom, Africaner and his brothers rose upon their master, and having put him to death, they seized what fire-arms they could lay their hands on, and fled.

Africaner, with as little loss of time as possible, rallied the remnant of his tribe, and, with what they could take with them, directed their course to the Orange river, and were soon beyond the reach of pursuers, who, in a thinly scattered population, required time to collect. He fixed his abode on the banks of the Orange river; and afterwards, a chief ceding to him his dominion in Great Namaqua-land, it henceforth became his by right, as well as by conquest.

Attempts were made on the part of the colonial government and the farmers, to punish this daring outrage on the P—— family; but though rewards were offered, Africaner dared them to approach his territories. Some of the farmers had recourse to another stratagem to rid the frontiers of such a terror; they bribed some of the Bastards, who were in the habit of visiting the colony, from the upper regions of the Orange river. This gave rise to a long series of severe and sometimes bloody conflicts between the Africaners and the chief Berend and his associates;—Berend being impelled by a twofold reward, and Africaner by a desire to wreak his vengeance on the farmers, who were once his friends, but now the

instigators of the deeply laid scheme. Though these two chiefs dreadfully harassed each other, neither conquered; but continued to breathe against each other the direst hatred, till, by the gospel of peace, they were brought to "beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks."

As soon as Africaner had discovered the origin of the plot, which had well-nigh overthrown his power, he visited the boundaries of the colony. A farmer named Engelbrecht, and a Hottentot, fell victims to his fury, and their cattle and other property were carried off, to atone for the injuries inflicted by the machinations of the farmers. Africaner now became a terror, not only to the colony on the south, but also to the tribes on the north. The original natives of the country justly viewed him as a dangerous neighbour, even though he had obtained, by lawful means, a portion in their country. They considered him as the common enemy. This led to pilfering and provocations on their part; conduct which he was sure to pay back in their own way, with large interest. The tribes fled at his approach. His name carried dismay even to the solitary wastes. At a subsequent pe-

riod, as I was standing with a Namaqua chief, looking at Africaner, in a supplicating attitude, entreating parties ripe for a battle, to live at peace with each other: "Look," said the wondering chief, pointing to Africaner, "there is the man, once the lion, at whose roar even the inhabitants of distant hamlets fled from their homes! Yes, and I," (patting his chest with his hand,) "have, for fear of his approach, fled with my people, our wives and our babes, to the mountain glen, or to the wilderness, and spent nights among beasts of prey, rather than gaze on the eyes of this lion, or hear his roar."

After the general aspect of affairs began to settle in that part of the country where Africaner's head-quarters were, other distant and interior parts of the country became a theatre, in which the inhabitants of the colony were pursuing a bloody game, in shooting the aborigines, and carrying off their cattle. The landrost of one of the colonial districts sent a message to Africaner, requesting him to try and put a stop to these proceedings, and especially those of a farmer, who, with his attendants, had secured themselves in a stronghold in the country. Africaner promptly obeyed

the call, and as he did not intend to fight them, he went with some of his chief men on oxen, to recommend them peaceably to retire from the country in which they were such a scourge. On approaching the temporary dwellings of these free-booters, and within gun-shot, the farmer levelled his long *roer* at the small party, and several shot entering Africaner's shoulder, instantly brought him to the ground. His companions immediately took up their arms, and the farmer, knowing that their shots were deadly, kept out of the way, allowing the wounded chief and his attendants to retire, which they did, and returned home brooding revenge.

As soon as the shot were extracted, and the wound partially healed, though the arm was lamed for life, Africaner, who was not a man to be frightened from his purpose, resumed his campaign; and the result was, that this marauder, under a Christian name, was driven from his stronghold, and compelled to take refuge in the colony whence he had come. The success which, in almost every instance, followed the arms of such a small and inconsiderable body of banditti as that of Africaner, may be ascribed to his mode of warfare. He en-

deavoured always to attack his enemy on the plain; or, if entrenched, or among bushes, he instantly drove them from their sheltering-places; where, if both parties were of the same mind, they would continue, from day to day, occasionally discharging their missiles. By Africaner's mode of warfare, the conflict was soon decided. His reasons were these: he did not like suspense when life was at stake; he preferred to conquer a people before they had time to be alarmed, which saved them much agony of mind, and spared the unnecessary effusion of blood. Africaner was a man of great prowess, and possessed a mind capable of studying the tactics of savage warfare. His brother, Titus, was perhaps still more fierce and fearless; and, though a little man, he was an extraordinary runner, and able to bear unparalleled fatigue. He has been known, single-handed, to overtake a party of twenty possessing fire-arms, and only retired when his musket was shot to pieces in his hand. On one occasion, Berend's party, who were far superior in numbers, headed by Nicholas Berend, unexpectedly carried off every ox and cow belonging to Africaner; only a few calves being left in the stall. After a despe-

rate, though very unequal, contest for a whole day, having repeatedly taken and lost their cattle, they returned home, slaughtered the calves which were left them, and rested a couple of days in order to dry the flesh in the sun, ready for the intended campaign. For several days they pursued their course along the northern banks of the Orange river; and having, by spies, found out the rendezvous of the enemy on the southern side of the river, they passed beyond them, in order to attack them from a quarter on which they fancied they were safe. They swam over in the dead of the night, with their ammunition and clothes tied on their heads, and their guns on their shoulders. The little force thus prepared, not unlike that of Bruce at Bannockburn, seized their opportunity, and, when all the enemy were slumbering in perfect security, aroused them by a volley of stones falling on their fragile huts. The inmates rushed out, and were received by a shower of arrows; and before they could fairly recover their senses, and seize their guns, the discharge of musketry convinced them that they were besieged by a host encamped in the most favourable position. They consequently fled in the greatest

consternation, leaving the captured cattle, as well as their own, in the hands of the Africaners.

Nicholas Berend, to whom reference has been made, was once engaged in a desperate conflict with Titus Africaner, from whose lips I had heard the same tale. The two had been engaged for hours in mutual strife, taking and re-taking a herd of cattle. By means of the large drove and bushes, each had managed to conceal himself. Suddenly a passage opening in the troop, which exposed the enraged combatants to each other's view, their rifles were instantly levelled. The moment they touched the triggers, a cow darted in between, and the two balls lodged in the centre of the animal, which fell dead on the spot. But for this interposition, both would, in all probability, have fallen, as they were most expert marksmen. A man who would deliberately smile the moment he laid the lion dead at his feet, who appeared incapable of fear, and reckless of danger, could not help acknowledging being most powerfully struck with his escape from the ball of his antagonist; and would say to me, when I referred to the fact, "Mynheer knows how to use the only hammer which makes my hard heart feel."

Nicholas finished his Christian course under the pastoral care of the Rev. T. L. Hodgson, Wesleyan missionary at Boochoap. His end was peace.

It was in the neighbourhood of this terrible robber and murderer that the missionaries took up their abode. The Messrs. Albrecht (this was the name of the two missionaries) endured hardship, as good soldiers, while here. But they, with their wives, were about to be exposed to the severest trials of their faith in God, who has promised to be with his servants even unto the end of the world. The mission was just enjoying the prospect of permanence and success, when the hostility of this noted desperado was awakened against it, and he threatened its destruction.

“Africaner, being an outlaw, could not visit the colony or Cape Town, and, in order to procure supplies, employed others. He entrusted Hans Drayer with three teams, or thirty oxen, commissioning him to purchase a wagon with the twenty, and with the remaining ten to bring it home; and at the same time allowing an ample reward for Hans. He had not gone far into the colony before he met

a farmer to whom he owed a large debt, and who very naturally seized the whole. Hans returned chop-fallen to Mr. Seidenfaden's missionary station at Kamiesberg, of which he had the charge during Mr. S.'s absence. Africaner, hearing of what had happened, went in quest of Hans, whom he expected to find humble, but who was insolent to the last degree. On their punishing him with a sambock, he seized a gun, and levelled it at Africaner, but he was instantly despatched."

Mr. Seidenfaden having left debts behind him, among the Great Namaquas, and some of the Africaners, a portion of his property was seized. After this the friends of Hans, with the assistance of the Namaquas, sought revenge on the people of Africaner, but not succeeding, obtained assistance from the people of Warm Bath. This, with a false report that they had taken some of his cattle, and that the missionaries were their abettors, dreadfully enraged Africaner, who vowed vengeance on the mission.

The situation of the missionaries and their wives was now most distressing. Among a feeble and timid people, with scarcely any means of defence, a bare country around, no

mountain-glen or cave in which they could take refuge, a burning sun, and a glowing plain ; two hundred miles from the abodes of civilized men, between which lay a waste-howling wilderness, and the Orange river, seldom fordable by wagons ! Such was their position with the human lion in his lair, ready to rouse himself up to deeds of rapine and blood. This is no coloured picture, for the writer has with his family been placed in circumstances not dissimilar : experience is requisite to aid in just conceptions of so trying a moment. For a whole month they were in constant terror, hourly expecting the threatened attack. The hearts of the missionaries were riven with anguish ; their souls revolted at the idea of abandoning the people, who were now suffering from want, to become a prey to one from whom they could expect no quarter. On one occasion they dug square holes in the ground, about six feet deep, that in case of an attack they might escape the balls ; there they remained buried alive for the space of a week, having the tilt sail of the wagon thrown over the mouth of the pit to keep off the burning rays of an almost vertical sun. As one of the sufferers told me, she

scarcely knew whether they had to suffer most by day or by night, for the heat sometimes amounted nearly to suffocation. From this place they removed, at the suggestion of Fledermuis, a chief, northward to the base of the Karas mountains ; but finding it impossible to settle, they retired to the colony to seek counsel and assistance.

But to return to Africaner. He spread devastation around him, attacked the Namaquas, and proceeded to Warm Bath. Finding it abandoned, his followers commenced a rigid search for any articles which might have been concealed for safety in the earth, and were but too successful. While the plunderers were engaged in their destructive operations, an incident occurred, almost too ludicrous for so melancholy a recital. As the triumphant chief and his adherents were revelling in their ill-gotten spoils, not without some qualms of conscience, derived from the light (however little) which they had received, especially as they now stood upon holy ground, which recalled the scenes of bygone days, one of the chieftain's attendants strayed into the burying ground, where already a few mounds distinguished it from the surrounding waste as the

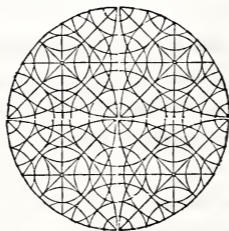
place of the dead. Stepping over what he supposed a newly closed grave, he heard, to his surprise, soft notes of music vibrate beneath. He stood motionless, gazing over his shoulder, with mouth and eyes dilated, hesitating whether to stand still, and see the dead arise, which he had heard the missionaries preach about, or to take to his heels. After no little palpitation of heart, in order to assure himself, he mustered courage to make another trial, for the tones he had heard had died away. His second leap again roused the sepulchral harp, which now fell in soft but awful cadence on his ear. Without casting an eye behind, he darted off to the camp, and, with breathless amazement, announced to Africaner the startling discovery he had made of life and music in the grave. The appearance of the man convinced Africaner that he was in earnest. The chief, fearless of the living or the dead, was not to be scared even by the supposed spectre of the tomb, arose, and ordered his men to follow him to the spot. One jumped and another jumped, and at each succeeding leap, succeeding notes of the softest music vibrated on the ear from beneath. Recourse was had instantly to exhumation. The mysterious

musician was soon brought to light. It proved to be Mrs. Albrecht's piano-forte, which she had taken with her from London, and which was the first ever conveyed into these regions. Being too cumbrous to be taken in a hasty flight, it had been buried in a soil where, from the entire absence of moisture, it might, but from this circumstance, have remained unscathed. Africaner, whose martial spirit made him a fitter associate for Mars than for the Muses, allowed the instrument to be dissected, parts of which I have seen, from which those fingers now silent in the grave had called forth divine harmony.

To finish the varied but sorrowful detail, one of the men of Africaner, on seeing him depart, took a fire-brand, and set fire to the houses and huts, which were soon reduced to ashes; and thus the light of Divine truth, which had just been enkindled in those gloomy regions, was extinguished for a season; and a peaceful Zion reduced to a heap of ruins.

The missionaries returned to Cape Town, and afterwards Mr. and Mrs. C. Albrecht attempted to come back and resume the mission among the Namaquas. Mrs. Albrecht died on the journey, and her husband resumed

the work at Pella, south of the Orange river, but his labours were soon terminated by death ; yet before his death he had the joy of making peace with *Africaner*, and of seeing the standard of the cross reared in the very settlement of the man whose deeds of blood had made his name a terror to the missionaries and the heathen.



CHAPTER IV.

The Story of Africaner, continued.

IN 1812, the Rev. J. Campbell, who visited Africa in behalf of the London Missionary Society, finding, wherever he went, in crossing the continent, that the name of Africaner was a terror to the people, determined to write to him, and endeavour to persuade him to have a missionary in his own village. It was long before he could find any one who was not afraid to carry the letter. Africaner received the letter at last, and some time afterwards he sent a reply to it, which Mr. Campbell did not receive, and consequently did not send a missionary. But his letter to Africaner awakened his mind. In that letter he told Africaner he was sorry that he should be the occasion of so much misery and oppression in that part of Africa—that as he knew there was a God, and a judgment to come, he could not believe but that Africaner must be an unhappy

man by being the cause of so much unhappiness to others.

The savage robber resolved to have a missionary, and sending a messenger to Pella, below the Orange river, he obtained one—Mr. Ebner—who at once proceeded to Africaner's settlement, and there, in the very den of the beast, began to preach Christ crucified. And that preaching was made the power of God to the salvation of the bloody warrior. The hard heart of Africaner was melted by the grace of God under the preaching of the missionary, and soon we hear of the savage sitting at the feet of Jesus, and saying, "I am glad that I am delivered. I have been long enough engaged in the service of the devil, but now I am free from his bondage. Jesus has delivered me; him will I serve, and with him will I abide."

Mr. Moffat went to Africaner's village to succeed Mr. Ebner, who returned to Pella. On his way there, Mr. Moffat says: "As I approached the boundaries of the Dutch colony, the farmers, who, of course, had not one good word to say of Africaner, were skeptical to the last degree about his reported conversion, and predicted my destruction. One said he would

set me up for a mark for his boys to shoot at; and another, that he would strip off my skin, and make a drum of it to dance to; another most consoling prediction was, that he would make a drinking cup of my skull. I believe they were serious, and especially a kind motherly lady, who, wiping the tear from her eye, bade me farewell, saying, ‘Had you been an old man, it would have been nothing, for you would soon have died, whether or no; but you are young, and going to become a prey to that monster.’ ”

Mr. Moffat pushed on, and after a journey attended with great fatigue and exposure, he reached the village, where he was received with kindness by Africaner, and his brothers. But there was no warmth in the reception he met, and the young missionary was not much encouraged by the appearance of things. Titus Africaner was decidedly hostile to the gospel, and there was ground to fear that this man would proceed to violent measures. Even Christian Africaner did not show any zeal in support of the missionary. Under these trying circumstances Mr. Moffat commenced his labours, and the Lord was with him. He opened a school and had public religious services

with all who would attend, every morning and evening. Soon, he says, "I was cheered with tokens of the Divine presence. The chief, who had for some time past been in a doubtful state, attended with such regularity, that I might as well doubt of morning's dawn, as of his attendance on the appointed means of grace. To reading, in which he was not very fluent, he attended with all the assiduity and energy of a youthful believer; the Testament became his constant companion, and his profiting appeared unto all. Often have I seen him under the shadow of a great rock, nearly the livelong day, eagerly perusing the pages of Divine inspiration; or, in his hut he would sit, unconscious of the affairs of a family around, or the entrance of a stranger, with his eye gazing on the blessed book, and his mind wrapt up in things divine. Many were the nights he sat with me, on a great stone, at the door of my habitation, conversing with me till the dawn of another day, on creation, providence, redemption, and the glories of the heavenly world. He was like the bee, gathering honey from every flower, and at such seasons he would, from what he had stored up in the course of the day's reading, repeat generally

in the very language of Scripture, those passages which he could not fully comprehend. He had no commentary, except the living voice of his teacher, nor marginal references, but he soon discovered the importance of consulting parallel passages, which an excellent memory enabled him readily to find. He did not confine his expanding mind to the volume of revelation, though he had been taught by experience, that that contained heights and depths, and lengths and breadths, which no man comprehends. He was led to look upon the book of nature; and he would regard the heavenly orbs with an inquiring look, cast his eye on the earth beneath his tread, and regarding both as displays of creative power and infinite intelligence, would inquire about endless space and infinite duration. I have often been amused, when sitting with him and others, who wished to hear his questions answered, and descriptions given of the majesty, extent, and number of the works of God; he would at last rub his hands on his head, exclaiming, 'I have heard enough; I feel as if my head was too small, and as if it would swell with these great subjects.'

“Before seasons like these to which I am

referring, Titus, who was a grief to his brother, and a terror to most of the inhabitants on the station, as well as a fearful example of ungodliness, had become greatly subdued in spirit. I had again and again addressed him in soft and affectionate language, on his best interests, till he at last entered the house of God, and became at once a steady and unwavering friend, and many times did he minister to my wants in that hungry land. He, too, would not unfrequently sit nearly a whole night with the chief and myself, in comparative silence. He thought his doing so would be pleasing to me, but he would never make a profession. He was wont to say his head had become too hard with sin, adding, 'I hear what you say, and I think I sometimes understand, but my heart will not feel.' He was the only individual of influence on the station who had two wives, and fearing the effects of example, I have occasionally made a delicate reference to the subject, and, by degrees, could make more direct remarks on that point, which was one of the barriers to his happiness; but he remained firm, admitting, at the same time, that a man with two wives was not to be envied; adding, 'He is often in

an uproar, and when they quarrel, he does not know whose part to take.' He said he often resolved when there was a great disturbance, he would pay one off. One morning I had thought the anticipated day had come. He approached my door, leading an ox, upon which one of his wives was seated. 'What is the matter?' I inquired. Giving me a shake of his hand, and laughing, he replied, 'Just the old thing over again. Mynheer must not laugh too much at me, for I am now in for it.' The two wives had quarrelled at the outpost, and the one in a rage had thrown a splinter from a stick at the other, which had entered the palm of her hand, and left a piece about an inch long, and the thickness of a finger. The hand had swollen greatly. 'Why,' I asked, 'did you not bring her sooner?' 'She was afraid to see you, and would not come, till I assured her that you were a *maak mensche*' (a tame man.) Having made an incision, and extracted the piece of wood, she was melted into tears with gratitude, while I earnestly exhorted her to a better course of life.

"But to return to the character of Africaner. During the whole period I lived there, I do

not remember having occasion to be grieved with him, or to complain of any part of his conduct; his very faults seemed to 'lean to virtue's side.' One day, when seated together, I happened, in absence of mind, to be gazing steadfastly on him. It arrested his attention, and he modestly inquired the cause. I replied, 'I was trying to picture to myself your carrying fire and sword through the country, and I could not think how eyes like yours could smile at human wo.' He answered not, but shed a flood of tears!

He zealously seconded my efforts to improve the people in cleanliness and industry; and it would have made any one smile to have seen Christian Africaner and myself superintending the school children, now about one hundred and twenty, washing themselves at the fountain. It was, however, found that their greasy, filthy carosses of sheepskins soon made them as dirty as ever. The next thing was to get them to wash their mantles, &c. This was no easy matter, from their being made chiefly of skins, not tanned, and sewed together with thread made of the sinews of animals. It required a great deal of coaxing argument, and perseverance, to induce them

to undertake this Herculean task ; but this, too, was also accomplished, to their great comfort, for they willingly admitted that they formerly harboured so much company, that they could not sleep soundly. It may be emphatically said of Africaner, that ‘he wept with those that wept,’ for wherever he heard of a case of distress, thither his sympathies were directed ; and notwithstanding all his spoils of former years, he had little to spare, but he was ever on the alert to stretch out a helping hand to the widow and fatherless. At an early period I also became an object of his charity ; for finding out that I sometimes sat down to a scanty meal, he presented me with two cows, which, though in that country giving little milk, often saved me many a hungry night, to which I was exposed. He was a man of peace ; and though I could not expound to him that the ‘sword of the magistrate’ implied, that he was calmly to sit at home, and see Bushmen or marauders carry off his cattle, and slay his servants ; yet so fully did he understand and appreciate the principles of the gospel of peace, that nothing could grieve him more than to hear of individuals, or villages, contending with one another.

“He who was formerly like a firebrand, spreading discord, enmity, and war among the neighbouring tribes, would now make any sacrifice to prevent any thing like a collision between two contending parties ; and when he might have raised his arm, and dared them to lift a spear, or draw a bow, he would stand in the attitude of a suppliant, and entreat them to be reconciled to each other ; and, pointing to his past life, ask, ‘What have I now of all the battles I have fought, and all the cattle I took, but shame and remorse ?’ At an early period of my labours among that people, I was deeply affected by the sympathy he, as well as others of his family, manifested towards me in a season of affliction. The extreme heat of the weather, in the house which I have described, and living entirely on meat and milk, to which I was unaccustomed, brought on a severe attack of bilious fever, which, in the course of two days, induced delirium. Opening my eyes in the first few lucid moments, I saw my attendant and Africaner sitting before my couch, gazing on me with eyes full of sympathy and tenderness. Seeing a small parcel, containing a few medicines, I requested him to hand it to me, and taking from it a vial of

calomel, I threw some of it into my mouth, for scales or weights I had none. He then asked me, the big tear standing in his eye, if I died, how they were to bury me. 'Just in the same way as you bury your own people,' was my reply; and I added, that he need be under no apprehensions if I were called away, for I should leave a written testimony of his kindness to me. This evidently gave him some comfort, but his joy was full, when he saw me speedily restored, and at my post, from which I had been absent only a few days.

"In addition to Christian Africaner, his brothers, David and Jacobus, both believers, and zealous assistants in the work of the mission, especially in the school, were a great comfort to me. David, though rather of a retiring disposition, was amiable, active, and firm; while Jacobus was warm, affectionate, and zealous for the interests of souls. His very countenance was wont to cheer my spirits, which, notwithstanding all I had to encourage, would sometimes droop. Long after I left that people, he was shot, while defending the place against an unexpected attack made on it by the people of Warm Bath. This intelligence deeply affected me, for I knew that he and David, with

a select few, continued, in accordance with the dying charge of their elder brother, to keep the lamp of God alive; while Jonker, the son and successor of the departed chief, turned to those courses from which he had been warned by the last accents which fell from his father's lips, though he had been a promising youth, without having made any profession of faith in the Gospel. The following fact will serve to illustrate the character of Kobus, as he was usually called. The drought was excessive; the people were distressed at the idea of being compelled to leave the station in search of grass. Special prayer-meetings were held to implore the blessing of rain. Prayer was soon answered, and the heavens, which had been as brass, were covered with clouds, the thunders rolled, and rain fell like a torrent. The display of Divine condescension produced a powerful effect on the minds of the people, and many were the eyes that wept tears of gratitude. I went out of my hut, where I had been nearly blinded by the vivid glare of the lightning, and witnessed Kobus comforting his wife, who was not a believer, while she seemed terror-struck at the tremendous peals which even yet were rending the heavens, and mak-

the very earth to tremble beneath. He asked her how she could be afraid of a God so kind, and who could send down the rain of his grace, with equal abundance, on dry and parched souls ; and, falling on his knees, he adored God for the blessings of salvation. At this time, another interesting event greatly encouraged me. The subject was a venerable mother, a member of the church, and one of the fruits of the mission on the Orange river. Entering her hut, and asking how she felt, looking upwards with an expression of sweet composure, ‘ I am looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus,’ was her reply. Observing me addressing her unbelieving daughters, who were weeping around her bed, she remarked, ‘ Yes, I have called them, that they may see a Christian die ;’ and a few hours after, she was called to the bosom of her God.”

After Mr. Moffat has given these interesting particulars of his labours, and the blessing of God upon them, we might follow him on an exploring tour still further north, and into the interior, carrying the gospel to those who had never yet heard of God. But he had not the means of travelling ; the only wagon he

had was broken down, and he had to turn blacksmith himself to mend it. In this work he had not the advantage of John Williams, the "Martyr Missionary," who had learned the trade when he was a boy. To repair the wagon he must heat and weld the iron; and to do this he must have a pair of blacksmith's bellows; and he tells us how he went to work.

"After ruminating for a day or two on what I had seen in smiths' shops in Cape Town, I resolved on making a trial, and got a native bellows, made of goat's skin, to the neck end of which was attached the horn of an elk, and at the other end two parallel sticks were fastened, which were opened by the hand in drawing it back, and closed when pressed forward, but making a puffing like something broken-winded. The iron was only red-hot, after a good perspiration, when I found I must give it up as a bad job; observing to the chief, if I must accompany him, it must be on the back of an ox. Reflecting again on the importance of having a wagon for the purpose of carrying food, when game happened to be killed, (for our sole dependence was on the success of hunting,) and Africaner evidently

not liking, on my account, to go without a wagon, I set my brains again to work, to try and improve on the bellows ; for it was wind I wanted. Though I had never welded a bit of iron in my life, there was nothing like 'Try.' I engaged the chief to have two goats killed, the largest on the station, and their skins prepared, entire, in the native way, till they were as soft as cloth. These skins now resembled bags, the open ends of which I nailed to the edge of a circular piece of board, in which was a valve ; one end of the machine was connected with the fire, and had a weight on it to force out the wind, when the other end was drawn out to supply more air. This apparatus was no sooner completed, than it was put to the test, and the result answered satisfactorily, in a steady current of air ; and soon I had all the people around me, to witness my operations with the new-fangled bellows. Here I sat, receiving their praises, but heartily wishing their departure, lest they should laugh at my burning the first bit of iron I took in my hands to weld. A blue granite stone was my anvil ; a clumsy pair of tongs, and a hammer never intended for the work of a forge. My first essay was with some trepidation, for

I did not like so many lookers-on. Success, however, crowned my efforts, to the no small delight of the spectators. Having finished what was necessary for the wagon, I was encouraged to attempt the repair of some gunlocks, which were as essential for the comfort and success of the journey as the wagon. In doing this, I began with one which I thought I could not spoil, should I not succeed; and accomplishing that, I was able to put the others in order."

Having thus succeeded in making the necessary preparations, Mr. Moffat, with Africaner and a large party, set out on a journey, the immediate design of which was to find a place where water was more abundant, and where the settlement might be made with more comfort and health. During this journey he suffered greatly from hunger, so much so that he would sometimes "tie a string around his stomach to prevent the gnawing of hunger;" and in these circumstances he would break the bread of eternal life to the perishing heathen.

The ignorance of the people whom he met in the native villages was most distressing. Instead, however, of dwelling on his own ob-

servations of the condition of those degraded heathen, Mr. Moffat gives us extracts from the accounts of other travelling missionaries, which he says were confirmed by what he saw and heard. These extracts are important to show how little knowledge the heathen obtain of God. In 1815, Mr. Schmelen was in Namaqua land, and had this conversation with one of the natives, as given in his own journal:—

“Did you ever hear of a God?”

“Yes, we have heard that there is a God, but we do not know right.”

“Who told you that there is a God?”

“We heard it from other people.”

“Did you ever see a ship?”

“Yes, we have seen them a long time ago.”

“Did you ever hear who made the first one?”

“No, we never heard it.”

“Did you never hear old people talk about it.”

“No, we never heard it from them.”

“Who made the heavens?”

“We do not know what man made them.”

“Who made the sun?”

“We always heard that those people at the

sea made it; when she goes down, they cut her in pieces, and fry her in a pot, and then put her together again, and bring her out at the other side. Sometimes the sun is over our head, and at other times she must give place for the moon to pass by. They said the moon had told to mankind that we must die, and not become alive again; that is the reason that when the moon is dark we sometimes become ill."

"Is there any difference between man and beast?"

"We think man has made the beasts."

"Did you ever see a man that made beasts?"

"No, I only heard so from others."

"Do you know you have a soul?"

"I do not know it."

"How shall it be with us after death?"

"When we are dead, we are dead; when we have died, we go over the sea-water, at that side where the devil is."

"What do you mean by the devil?"

"He is not good; all people who die, run to him."

"How does the devil behave to them, well or ill?"

"You shall see; all our people are there

who have died (in the ships). Those people in the ships are masters over them."

This reference to their people dying in ships, seems to show that these Africans have derived their notions from the slave-dealers, whom they justly look upon as emissaries of the devil.

Mr. Campbell says that Africaner "being asked what his views of God were before he enjoyed the benefit of Christian instruction, his reply was, that he never thought any thing at all on these subjects ; that he thought about nothing but his cattle. He admitted that he had heard of a God, (well might he, being brought up in the colony,) but he at the same time stated that his views of God were so erroneous, that the name suggested no more to his mind than something that might be found in the form of an insect or the lid of a snuff-box."

Having found water by digging near the branches of the Fish river, they proposed to remain ; but the natives manifested so much opposition that the party resolved to return.

CHAPTER V.

The Lion and the Giraffe—Terror of oxen when lions are near—A mother left to die—Mr. Moffat is poisoned, but recovers.

MR. MOFFAT mentions some remarkable adventures on his way back to the station; and the first that he relates is so extraordinary that we would scarcely believe it, were it not confirmed by the circumstances which Mr. Moffat saw. He says, that near a very small fountain stood a camel thorn-tree; it was a stiff tree, about twelve feet high, with a flat, bushy top. Many years ago, a boy was returning to his village, and having turned aside to the fountain for a drink, lay down on the bank, and fell asleep. Being awakened by the piercing rays of the sun, he saw, through the bush behind which he lay, a giraffe browsing at ease on the tender shoots of the tree, and to his horror, a lion, creeping like a cat, only a dozen yards from him, preparing to pounce on his prey. The lion eyed the giraffe for a few

moments, his body gave a shake, and he bounded into the air, to seize the head of the animal, which instantly turned his stately neck ; and the lion, missing his grasp, fell on his back in the centre of the mass of thorns, like spikes, and the giraffe bounded over the plain. The boy instantly followed the example, expecting, as a matter of course, that the enraged lion would soon find his way to the earth. Some time afterwards, the people of the village, who seldom visited that spot, saw the eagles hovering in the air ; and as it is almost always a certain sign that the lion has killed game, or some animal is lying dead, they went to the place, and sought in vain, till, coming under the lee of the tree, the smell of the carcass directed them to where the lion lay dead in his thorny bed.

One night, says Mr. Moffat, we were quietly encamped near a small pool ; “ we had just closed our united evening worship, the book was still in my hand, and the closing notes of the song of praise had scarcely fallen from our lips, when the terrific roar of the lion was heard ; our oxen, which before were quietly chewing the cud, rushed upon us, and over our fires, leaving us prostrated in a cloud of

dust and sand. Hats and hymn-books, our Bible and our guns, were all scattered in wild confusion. Providentially, no serious injury was sustained; the oxen were pursued, brought back, and secured to the wagon, for we could ill afford to lose any. Africaner, seeing the reluctance of the people to pursue in a dark and gloomy ravine, grasped a firebrand, and exclaimed, 'Follow me!' and but for this promptness and intrepidity we must have lost some of our number, for nothing can exceed the terror of oxen at even the smell of a lion. Though they may happen to be in the worst condition possible, worn out with fatigue and hunger, the moment the shaggy monster is perceived, they start like race-horses, with their tails erect, and sometimes days will elapse before they are found. The number of lions may be easily accounted for, when it is remembered how thinly scattered the inhabitants are; and, indeed, the whole appearance of the country impresses the mind with the idea that it is only fit for beasts of prey. The people seem to drag out a miserable existence, wandering from place to place in quest of grass, game, or wild roots. Those I had met with had, from infancy, been living a no-

madic life, with one great object in view, to keep soul and body together.

“ ‘ A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osiered sides ;
Where sedgy pool, nor bubbling fount,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mount
Appears, to refresh the aching eye ;
But barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon round and round
Spread—void of living sight or sound.’

“ Among the poorer classes it is, indeed, struggling for existence ; and when the aged become too weak to provide for themselves, and are a burden to those whom they nursed in infancy and reared to manhood, they are not unfrequently abandoned by their own children, with a meal of victuals and a cruse of water, to perish in the desert ; and I have seen a small circle of stakes fastened in the ground, within which were still lying the bones of a parent bleached in the sun, who had been thus abandoned. In one instance I observed a small broken earthenware vessel, in which the last draught of water had been left. ‘ What is this ? ’ I said, pointing to the stakes, addressing Africaner. His reply was, ‘ This is heathenism ; ’ and then described this parricidal custom. A day or two after, a cir-

cumstance occurred which corroborated his statements. We had travelled all day over a sandy plain, and passed a sleepless night from extreme thirst and fatigue. Rising early in the morning, and leaving the people to get the wagon ready to follow, I went forward with one of our number, in order to see if we could not perceive some indications of water, by the foot-marks of game, for it was in a part of the country where we could not expect the traces of man. After passing a ridge of hills, and advancing a considerable way on the plain, we discovered, at a distance, a little smoke rising amidst a few bushes, which seemed to skirt a ravine. Animated with the prospect, we hastened forward, eagerly anticipating a delicious draught of water, no matter what the quality might be. When we arrived within a few hundred yards of the spot, we stood still, startled at the fresh marks of lions, which appeared to have been there only an hour before us. We had no guns, being too tired to carry them, and we hesitated, for a moment, whether to proceed or return. The wagon was yet distant, and thirst impelled us to go on, but it was with caution, keeping a sharp look-out at every bush we passed.

“On reaching the spot, we beheld an object of heart-rending distress. It was a venerable-looking old woman, a living skeleton, sitting, with her head leaning on her knees. She appeared terrified at our presence, and especially at me. She tried to rise, but, trembling with weakness, sunk again to the earth. I addressed her by the name which sounds sweet in every clime, and charms even the savage ear: ‘My mother, fear not; we are friends, and will do you no harm.’ I put several questions to her, but she appeared either speechless, or afraid to open her lips. I again repeated, ‘Pray, mother, who are you, and how do you come to be in this situation?’ to which she replied, ‘I am a woman; I have been here four days; my children have left me here to die.’ ‘Your children!’ I interrupted. ‘Yes,’ raising her hand to her shrivelled bosom, ‘my own children, three sons and two daughters. They are gone,’ pointing with her finger, ‘to yonder blue mountain, and have left me to die.’ ‘And pray why did they leave you?’ I inquired. Spreading out her hands, ‘I am old, you see, and I am no longer able to serve them; when they kill game, I am too feeble to help in carrying home

the flesh; I am not able to gather wood to make fire; and I cannot carry their children on my back, as I used to do.' This last sentence was more than I could bear; and though my tongue was cleaving to the roof of my mouth for want of water, this reply opened a fountain of tears. I remarked that I was surprised that she had escaped the lions, which seemed to abound, and to have approached very near the spot where she was. She took hold of the skin of her left arm with her fingers, and, raising it up as one would do a loose linen, she added, 'I hear the lions; but there is nothing on me that they would eat; I have no flesh on me for them to scent.' At this moment the wagon drew near, which greatly alarmed her, for she supposed that it was an animal. Assuring her that it would do her no harm, I said that, as I could not stay, I would put her into the wagon, and take her with me. At this remark she became convulsed with terror. Others addressed her, but all to no effect. She replied, that if we took her, and left her at another village, they would only do the same thing again. 'It is our custom; I am nearly dead; I do not want to die again.' The sun was now piercingly

hot; the oxen were raging in the yoke, and we ourselves nearly delirious. Finding it impossible to influence the woman to move, without running the risk of her dying convulsed in our hands, we collected a quantity of fuel, gave her a good supply of dry meat, some tobacco, and a knife, with some other articles; telling her we should return in two days, and stop the night, when she would be able to go with us; only she must keep up a good fire at night, as the lions would smell the dried flesh, if they did not scent her. We then pursued our course; and after a long ride, passing a rocky ridge of hills, we came to a stagnant pool, into which men and oxen rushed precipitately, though the water was almost too muddy to go down our throats.

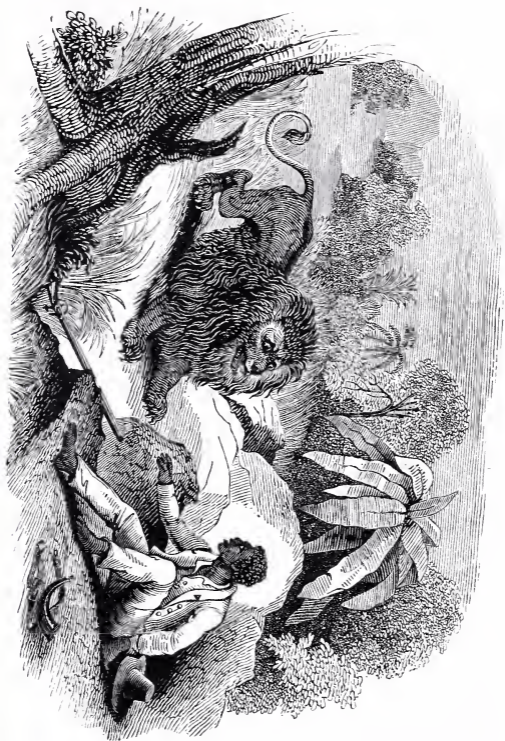
“On our return to the spot, according to promise, we found the old woman and every thing gone, but, on examination, discovered the footmarks of two men, from the hills referred to, who appeared to have taken her away. Several months afterwards, I learned, from an individual who visited the station, that the sons, seeing from a distance the wagon halt at the spot, where they had so unnaturally left their mother to perish, came to see, supposing

the travellers had been viewing the mangled remains of their mother. Finding her alive, and supplied with food, and on her telling the story of the strangers' kindness, they were alarmed, and, dreading the vengeance of the great chief, whom they supposed me to be, took her home, and were providing for her with more than usual care. I have often reasoned with the natives on this cruel practice; in reply to which, they would only laugh. It may be imagined, that people might devote their friends, and nobles their first-born, like the Carthaginians, to appease some offended deity; and that mothers, too, should smile on the infants their own hands had murdered, from similar motives; but it appears an awful exhibition of human depravity, when children compel their parents to perish for want, or to be devoured by beasts of prey in a desert, from no other motive than sheer laziness, or to get rid of those on whose breast they hung in helpless infancy, whose lips first directed their vocal powers, whose hand led them through many a weary waste, and who often suffered the most pinching want, that the babes whom nature taught them to love might be supplied. I have more than once handed food to a hun-

gry mother, who appeared to have fasted for a month, when she would just taste it, and give it to her child, when, perhaps, that very child, instead of returning grateful service to the infancy of old age, leaves that mother to perish from hunger."

The following fact will show the fearful dangers to which solitary travellers are sometimes exposed. A man belonging to Mr. Schmelen's congregation, at Bethany, returning homewards from a visit to his friends, took a circuitous course in order to pass a small fountain, or rather pool, where he hoped to kill an antelope to carry home to his family. The sun had risen to some height by the time he reached the spot, and seeing no game, he laid his gun down on a shelving low rock, the back part of which was covered over with a species of dwarf thorn-bushes. He went to the water, took a hearty drink, and returned to the rock, smoked his pipe, and being a little tired, fell asleep. In a short time the heat reflected from the rock awoke him, and opening his eyes, he saw a large lion crouching before him, with its eyes glaring in his face, and within little more than a yard of his feet. He sat motionless for some minutes, till he

had recovered his presence of mind, then eyeing his gun, moved his hand slowly towards it; the lion seeing him, raised its head, and gave a tremendous roar; he made another and another attempt, but the gun being far beyond his reach, he gave it up, as the lion seemed well aware of his object, and was enraged whenever he attempted to move his hand. His situation now became painful in the extreme; the rock on which he sat became so hot that he could scarcely bear his naked feet to touch it, and kept moving them, alternately placing one above the other. The day passed, and the night also, but the lion never moved from the spot; the sun rose again, and its intense heat soon rendered his feet past feeling. At noon the lion rose and walked to the water, only a few yards distant, looking behind as it went, lest the man should move, and seeing him stretch out his hand to take his gun, turned in a rage, and was on the point of springing upon him. The animal went to the water, drank, and returning, lay down again at the edge of the rock. Another night passed; the man, in describing it, said he knew not whether he slept, but if he did, it must have been with his eyes open, for he



always saw the lion at his feet. Next day, in the forenoon, the animal went again to the water, and while there, he listened to some noise apparently from an opposite quarter, and disappeared in the bushes. The man now made another effort, and seized his gun; but on attempting to rise, he fell, his ankles being without power. With his gun in his hand, he crept towards the water, and drank, but looking at his feet, he saw, as he expressed it, his "toes roasted," and the skin torn off with the grass. There he sat a few moments, expecting the lion's return, when he was resolved to send the contents of the gun through its head; but as it did not appear, tying his gun to his back, the poor man made the best of his way on his hands and knees, to the nearest path, hoping some solitary individual might pass. He could go no farther, when, providentially, a person came up, who took him to a place of safety, from whence he obtained help, though he lost his toes, and was a cripple for life.

Mr. Moffat says, with all their boldness, lions are sometimes great cowards.

"On one occasion a man coming unexpectedly on a lion, fainted. The lion raised him-

self to look over the bushes, and seeing no one, seemed to suspect a plot, and scampered off with his tail between his legs. It is but justice to add, that the man was no less cowardly; for, on awaking from his swoon, and looking this way and that, he imagined the object of his terror was still there, and taking to his heels, he made towards the wagon. I have known Bushmen, and even women, drive the lion away from the prey he has just seized, by beating their clubs on dry hides, and shouting; nevertheless, by day, and especially by night, he is an object of terror. Such subjects as these served sometimes to amuse our evening hours; more frequently, however, I requested my companions to propose questions on Scriptural and other important subjects, in answering which I had an opportunity of communicating much useful and edifying instruction."

During another journey, our missionary relates the following incidents:

"Reclining on a rock one day, waiting till my shirt, which I had washed, was dry, I noticed a crow rise from the earth, carrying something dangling in its talons. On directing my companions to the sight, they said, 'It

is only a crow with a tortoise ; you will see it fall presently ;' and down it fell. The crow descended, and up went the tortoise again to a still greater height, from which it dropped, and the crow instantly followed. I hastened with one of the men to the spot, and scared away the crow from the mangled tortoise, on which it was enjoying a feast. On looking around the flat rock there were many wrecks of former years ; and on my remarking I did not think the crow was so cunning, my companion replied, 'The kites do the same thing;' which I have since frequently observed.

“On one occasion I was remarkably preserved, when all expected that my race was run. We had reached the river early in the afternoon, after a dreadfully scorching ride across a plain. Three of my companions, who were in advance, rode forward to a Bushman village, on an ascent some hundred yards from the river. I went, because my horse would go, towards a little pool on a dry branch, from which the flood or torrent had receded to the larger course. Dismounting, I pushed through a narrow opening in the bushes, and lying down, took a hearty draught. Immedi-

ately on raising myself I felt an unusual taste in my mouth, and looking attentively at the water, and the temporary fence around, it flashed across my mind that the water was poisoned for the purpose of killing game. I came out, and meeting one of our number, who had been a little in our rear, just entering, told him my suspicion.

“At that moment a Bushman from the village came running breathless, and apparently terrified, took me by the hand, as if to prevent my going to the water, talking with great excitement, though neither I nor my companions could understand him; but when I made signs that I had drank, he was speechless for a minute or two, and then ran off to the village. I followed; and on again dismounting, as I was beginning to think for the last time, the poor Bushmen and women looked on me with eyes which bespoke heartfelt compassion. My companions expected me to fall down every moment; not one spoke. Observing the downcast looks of the poor Bushmen, I smiled, and this seemed to operate on them like an electric shock, for all began to babble and sing; the women striking their elbows against their naked sides, expressive of their joy. How-

ever, I began to feel a violent turmoil within, and a fulness of the system, as if the arteries would burst, while the pulsation was exceedingly quick, being accompanied with a slight giddiness in the head. We made the natives understand that I wanted the fruit of the solanum, which grows in those quarters nearly the size and shape of an egg, and which acts as an emetic. They ran in all directions, but sought in vain. By this time I was covered with a profuse perspiration, and drank largely of pure water. The strange and painful sensation which I had experienced gradually wore away, though it was not entirely removed for some days.

“I was deeply affected by the sympathy of these poor Bushmen, to whom we were utter strangers. When they saw me laugh, they deafened our ears with expressions of satisfaction, making a croaking and clicking, of which their language seemed to be made up. And these barbarians to the letter ‘showed us no little kindness,’ for they gave us some meat of zebras, which had died from drinking the same water on the preceding day. This was very acceptable; for having fasted that day, we were all ready for a meal; and,

though the poisoned water had partially blunted my appetite, I enjoyed a steak of the black-looking flesh mingled with its yellow fat."

But we will not follow the adventurous missionary further on this journey. Disappointed in the objects of their search, the party returned to the former station, where Mr. Moffat resumed his labours.



CHAPTER VI.

Africaner goes to Cape Town—A farmer's surprise—Returns to his people—His peaceful death.

AFRICANER was taken by surprise when Mr. Moffat proposed that he should go to Cape Town. He said to the missionary, "I thought you loved me, and do you want me to go where I shall be seized and hung?" And then putting his hand to his head, he said, "Do you not know that I am an outlaw, and that 1000 rix dollars have been offered for this poor head?"

So terrible had been the name of Africaner in times past, and so fearful had been his ravages among the colonists, that the government had offered a reward for his head, and it was very natural for him to think that if he should go within the reach of the white men, they would seize him and put him to death. But after Mr. Moffat had assured him that he

thought it would be a good thing for him to go to Cape Town, and that his life would be perfectly safe, Africaner said, "I shall commit my way to the Lord. I know he will not leave me."

The point was soon decided, and preparations were made for the journey. A large company followed the chief and the missionary when they set out; and the incidents of the journey are so interesting that we shall let Mr. Moffat describe them in his own way.

"Arriving at Pella, a missionary station already mentioned, we had a feast fit for heaven-born souls, and subjects to which the seraphim above might have tuned their golden lyres. Men met who had not seen each other since they had joined in mutual combat for each other's wo; met—warrior with warrior, bearing in their hands the olive branch, secure under the panoply of peace and love. They talked of Him who had subdued both, without a sword or spear, and each bosom swelled with purest friendship, and exhibited another trophy destined to adorn the triumph of the Prince of Peace, under whose banner each was promoting that reign in which—

“ ‘ No longer hosts encountering hosts,
Their heaps of slain deplore ;
They hang their trumpet in the hall,
And study war no more.’ ”

“ We spent some pleasant days while the subject of getting Africaner safely through the territories of the farmers to the Cape was the theme of much conversation. To some the step seemed somewhat hazardous. Africaner and I had fully discussed the point before leaving the station ; and I was confident of success. Though a chief, there was no need of laying aside any thing like royalty, with a view to travel in disguise. Of two substantial shirts left, I gave him one ; he had a pair of leather trousers, a duffel jacket, much the worse for wear, and an old hat, neither white nor black, and my own garb was scarcely more refined. As a further precaution, it was agreed, that for once I should be the chief, and that he should assume the appearance of a servant, when it was desirable, and pass for one of my attendants.

“ Ludicrous as the picture may appear, the subject was a grave one, and the season solemn and important ; often did I lift up my

eyes to Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men, that his presence might go with us. It might here be remarked, once for all, that the Dutch farmers, notwithstanding all that has been said against them by some travellers, are, as a people, exceedingly hospitable and kind to strangers. Exceptions there are, but these are few, and perhaps more rare than in any country under the sun. Some of these worthy people on the borders of the colony, congratulated me on returning alive, having often heard, as they said, that I had been long since murdered by Africaner. Much wonder was expressed at my narrow escape from such a monster of cruelty, the report having been spread that Mr. Ebner had just escaped by the skin of his teeth. While some would scarcely credit my identity, my testimony as to the entire reformation of Africaner's character, and his conversion, was discarded as the effusion of a frenzied brain. It sometimes afforded no little entertainment to Africaner and the Namaquas, to hear a farmer denounce this supposed irreclaimable savage. There were only a few, however, who were skeptical on the subject. At one farm, a novel scene exhibited the state of feel-

ing respecting Africaner and myself, and likewise displayed the power of divine grace under peculiar circumstances. It was necessary, from the scarcity of water, to call at such houses as lay in our road. The farmer referred to was a good man in the best sense of the word; and he and his wife had both shown me kindness on my way to Namaqua-land.

“On approaching the house, which was on an eminence, I directed my men to take the wagon to the valley below, while I walked toward the house. The farmer, seeing a stranger, came slowly down the descent to meet me. When within a few yards, I addressed him in the usual way, and stretching out my hand, expressed my pleasure at seeing him again. He put his hand behind him, and asked me, rather wildly, who I was. I replied that I was Moffat, expressing my wonder that he should have forgotten me. ‘Moffat!’ he rejoined, in a faltering voice; ‘it is your *ghost!*’ and moved some steps backward. ‘I am no ghost.’ ‘Don’t come near me!’ he exclaimed, ‘you have been long murdered by Africaner.’ ‘But *I am* no ghost,’ I said, feeling my hands, as if to convince him and myself, too, of my materiality; but his

alarm only increased. 'Everybody says you were murdered; and a man told me he had seen your bones;' and he continued to gaze at me, to the no small astonishment of the good wife and children, who were standing at the door, as also to that of my people, who were looking on from the wagon below. At length he extended his trembling hand, saying, 'When did you rise from the dead?' As he feared my presence would alarm his wife, we bent our steps towards the wagon, and Africaner was the subject of our conversation. I gave him in a few words my views of his present character, saying, 'He is now a truly good man.' To which he replied, 'I can believe almost any thing you say, but *that* I cannot credit; there are seven wonders in the world, that would be the eighth.' I appealed to the displays of Divine grace in a Paul, a Manasseh, and referred to his own experience. He replied, *these* were another description of men, but that Africaner was one of the accursed sons of Ham, enumerating some of the atrocities of which he had been guilty. By this time we were standing with Africaner at our feet, on whose countenance sat a smile, well knowing the prejudices of some of the

farmers. The farmer closed the conversation by saying, with much earnestness, 'Well, if what you assert be true respecting that man, I have only one wish, and that is, to see him before I die; and when you return, as sure as the sun is over our heads, I will go with you to see him, though he killed my own uncle.'

"I was not before aware of this fact, and now felt some hesitation whether to discover to him the object of his wonder; but knowing the sincerity of the farmer, and the goodness of his disposition, I said, 'This, then, is Africaner!' He started back, looking intensely at the man, as if he had just dropped from the clouds. 'Are you Africaner?' he exclaimed. He arose, doffed his old hat, and making a polite bow, answered, 'I am.' The farmer seemed thunder-struck; but when, by a few questions, he had assured himself of the fact, that the former bugbear of the border stood before him, now meek and lamb-like in his whole deportment, he lifted up his eyes, and exclaimed, 'O God, what a miracle of thy power! what cannot thy grace accomplish!' The kind farmer, and his no less hospitable wife, now abundantly supplied our wants; but we hast-

ened our departure, lest the intelligence might get abroad that Africaner was with me, and bring unpleasant visitors.”

The arrival of Africaner at Cape Town excited great curiosity and attention. He had been heard of as a scourge of the desert, and he was regarded as a monster. His name and exploits had been familiar to the inhabitants for more than twenty years. Many were struck with the unexpected mildness and gentleness of his demeanour, and others with his piety and accurate knowledge of the Scriptures. His New Testament was an interesting object of attention, it was so completely thumbed and worn by use. His answers to a number of questions put to him at a public meeting exhibited his diligence as a student in the doctrines of the gospel, especially when it is remembered that Africaner never saw a Catechism in his life, but obtained all his knowledge on theological subjects from a careful perusal of the Scriptures, and the verbal instructions of the missionary.

After spending some time at the Cape and producing a deep impression on the minds of those who saw him, of the value of missions and the power of the gospel to subdue the

most wicked, Africaner returned home. It was determined that Mr. Moffat should go to another mission, and so they parted. The good old Africaner, once a wild man of the desert, now a meek and lowly disciple of Christ, went back to his people, and in about two years he was called to enter into the joy of his Lord. This he had anticipated, with the full assurance of hope, believing that, "when his earthly house should be dissolved, he would have a building of God."—The closing scene of his life is faithfully delineated by the Rev. J. Archbell, Wesleyan missionary, in a letter to Dr. Philip, dated March 14th, 1823 :—

“When he found his end approaching, he called all the people together, after the example of Joshua, and gave them directions as to their future conduct. ‘We are not,’ said he, ‘what we were, *savages*, but men professing to be taught according to the gospel. Let us then do accordingly. Live peaceably with all men, if possible ; and if impossible, consult those who are placed over you, before you engage in any thing. Remain together, as you have done since I knew you. Then, when the Directors think fit to send you a mission

ary, you may be ready to receive him. Behave to any teacher you may have sent, as one sent of God, as I have great hope that God will bless you in this respect when I am gone to heaven. I feel that I love God, and that he has done much for me, of which I am totally unworthy.

“ ‘ My former life is stained with blood ; but Jesus Christ has pardoned me, and I am going to heaven. Oh ! beware of falling into the same evils into which I have led you frequently ; but seek God, and he will be found of you to direct you.’ ”

“ Africaner was a man of sound judgment, and of undaunted courage ; and although he himself was one of the first and the severest persecutors of the Christian cause, he would, had he lived, have spilled his blood, if necessary, for his missionary.”

This is one of the most remarkable instances of the power of divine grace which the missionary work has furnished. We love to record it to the praise of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, which has regard to the chief of sinners !

If Africaner found peace in believing in Jesus, who will despair ?

CHAPTER VII.

The Bechuanas—Missionary efforts—Mr. Moffat visits them—The awful ignorance of the natives.

THE Bechuanas are a race of Africans living at a great distance from civilized society, and very independent and savage in their habits. About the year 1800, they were visited by white men; and subsequently missionaries, who were labouring among other tribes, came occasionally into the country of the Bechuanas. Afterwards frequent attempts were made to open some intercourse with them, in the hope that the way might be prepared for the introduction of the gospel. But too often these expeditions were made by those who excited the jealousy of the people, and the result was fearful. At one time a party, composed chiefly of Hottentots, entered the country. They were well armed and mounted on oxen, and had some women with them.

They proceeded to the Moshen river, where they found some cattle outposts belonging to the Bechuanas, under Molehabangue, then residing at Lithako (the Lattakoo of Mr. Campbell.) Having nothing to offer in exchange, they supplied themselves with what they liked; took some of the cattle, killed those who resisted their depredations, and pursued their course for some days along the river. They reached the metropolis of that part of the country, where the tidings of the robbery had arrived before them; and the inhabitants had the mortification of beholding two or three of their pack-oxen in the possession of the marauders. Of course no notice was taken of it, and more than usual courtesy was exhibited towards the ragamuffin visitors, who, in order to keep up an appearance of an abundant quantity of ammunition, which in reality was exhausted, had filled some bags with sand to deceive the natives. When the appetites of the guests had been whetted, and the whole party were anxious for a revel in beef, two oxen were presented to them. One of them being extremely wild, (which was part of the stratagem,) took fright at the appearance of the motley group, darted off, when all pursued,

eager to secure their fat and tempting prey. This was the moment for revenge, and at a given signal, the Bechuanas attacked the strangers; several were speared at once. The others rallied, and retreated to one of the stone folds; but having scarcely any powder and shot, they made but a feeble resistance. Mercy in vain was asked, no quarter was given; and night put a close to the struggle; when the Bechuanas lay down by fires, surrounding their intended victims, as they usually do, even on the field of battle, and slept. Those of the travellers who were not wounded, aided by the darkness of the night, made their escape, and directed their course southward, as the colony was in that direction. At day-light the women and wounded were all put to death; and those who had escaped were pursued for three successive days, with the determination to exterminate the whole party. They had wellnigh succeeded; for one alone, of about fifty, reached the waterfall at the Orange river, there to relate the horrible catastrophe which they had drawn upon themselves, and to raise the hue-and-cry against the Bechuanas, as savages of no common degree of barbarism.

We will not dwell upon the various efforts of Christian missionaries to cultivate an acquaintance with this barbarous people. The Rev. Mr. Campbell has given a very interesting account of his travels in South Africa, from which we might derive abundant materials for a more extended narrative than our limits will allow. He visited the Bechuanas, and was deeply interested in the people; he found them anxiously desiring to have a missionary. Mr. Moffat says:

“To cast his eyes over a field so inviting; to hear the buzz of thousands of immortal beings, and, above all, the declaration of the chief, ‘Send missionaries,—I will be a father to them;’ this was one of the happiest moments in the life of a man, whose whole soul was engaged in an enterprise which had a special reference to the welfare of the poor degraded African, and the spread of the Redeemer’s cause throughout the world. Every event in that important journey authorized the most sanguine expectations on the part of Mr. C., and he viewed that as the most interesting period of his valuable life, the prelude to a new era in the history of African missions.”

He returned to England, and his graphic

and deeply interesting details produced a thrilling effect on the minds of the Christian public, who gave ample proof of their estimate of his labours and travels, by their increased liberality to the cause of missions, and especially to missions in Africa. In 1815, four missionaries were sent out to settle among the Bechuanas.

On their reaching Griqua Town, they were kindly received and encouraged by the brethren of that station. The late Adam Kok of Philippolis, Jan Hendreck, and others, as interpreters, and as men of influence with the Bechuanas, determined to accompany them to Lithako. This was the more desirable, as the Bechuanas, though heathens, having received signal services from Kok's father, greatly respected him, who was an excellent character, possessed of sound judgment and amiable disposition.

They reached the metropolis of that part of the country on the 17th of February, 1816; and the whole party, with their wagons, were admitted into the public square, when Mothibi, with many of his people, came up and shook hands with them. Mothibi's first question to A. Kok was, "What have you brought for

barter?" This was very natural for people who could not be supposed to have any thing like correct notions of the real object of the missionaries. It nevertheless appeared that their minds were made up on the subject; for, when informed of their object, and that they were the men promised by Mr. Campbell, chagrin marked the countenance of Mothibi, and strong tokens of disapprobation were evinced by the subordinate chiefs. This was a comfortless reception for those who had made a long voyage; passed tedious and fatiguing months of gipsy life in a desert and dangerous road; and had now reached the spot on which all their affections and hopes had centered, as the scene of future labour! In the evening, Kok, in a more formal way, introduced the missionaries to the king, when they presented to him the gifts of tobacco and beads which they had brought for that purpose; and Mahuto, the queen, also came in for a share. This was quite enough "to sweeten the heart," as the natives express it. At this favourable juncture, when they were exercised with uncertainty as to the result, and their desires were raised to the God in whose hands are the hearts of all men, Kok again stated their ob-

ject, and referred to the promise made by the king to Mr. Campbell. He answered, "They may come and protect me; but they want water, much water." Then, directing their attention to the Kuruman river, he immediately proceeded to converse on other subjects. He was again reminded that Mr. Hamilton was a worker in wood, and that another missionary was on his way who was a smith, and could make hatchets, etc. This statement evidently afforded him satisfaction, and he observed, at the same time, to Kok, that he could not think of refusing persons recommended by him. He still hesitated, however, cordially to approve of their wish to reside with him, his excuse being, "There is no water, there are no trees; the people have customs, and will not hear." He was assured that the missionaries only desired to remain in order to communicate instruction to those willing to receive it. After a couple of days' intercourse, during which they could elicit nothing satisfactory,—the king at one time assenting, then promising, and then cancelling,—he at length appealed to his people, of whose judgment in the affair he said he would approve, repeating his wish that the missionaries would go and reside on

the Kuruman river, and traffic with them, but that they should on no account teach the people. Mothibi then addressed his subjects thus: "Speak your minds. When the men were at the other place," viz., Messrs. Campbell and Read, "you remained silent, and when they departed you blamed me." Many of the people then exclaimed, "The missionaries must not come here;" and the king responded, "The missionaries must not come here!"

This was a dreadful disappointment, but what could they do?

With sorrowful hearts they retraced their weary steps over the waste-howling wilderness, in which there were few charms to engage, or in any degree to relieve their minds from the dark and heart-rending scenes which they had left behind, and which threw a shadow more gloomy still, on minds alive to the awful consequences of shaking off the dust of their feet against a city containing many thousands of immortal beings. They mused on the mystery not uncommonly attached to the ways of Him, who, though too wise to err, has His footsteps in the sea, and His path in the mighty waters.

The next attempt was more successful.

The Rev. Mr. Read shortly afterwards proceeded to the Kuruman river, and taking with him a large supply of articles for presents to the natives, he succeeded in gaining their affections so far as to obtain permission to settle among them.

But this favour was only purchased, and among those the most difficult to conciliate was Mahuto, the queen, whose influence over the king was very great. But the Lord enabled the mission to get a foothold among this people.

In 1820, the Rev. Robert Moffat and his wife joined the mission, and we shall follow his narrative of the wonderful works of God among these heathen. He gives a very striking description of the state of the people among whom he has come to reside.

The situation of the missionary among the Bechuanas is peculiar. He has no idolatry to arrest his progress, and his mind is not overwhelmed with the horrors which are to be found in countries where idols and idol temples are resorted to by millions of devotees; his ears are never stunned by their orgies; his eyes are never offended by human and other sacrifices, nor is he the spectator of the

unhappy widow immolated on the funeral pile of her husband; the infant screams of Moloch's victims never rend his heart. He meets with no sacred streams, nor hears of voluntary victims to propitiate the anger of imaginary deities. He seeks in vain to find a temple, an altar, or a single emblem of heathen worship. No fragments remain of former days, as mementoes to the present generation, that their ancestors ever loved, served, or revered a being greater than man. A profound silence reigns on this awful subject. Satan has been too successful in leading captive at his will a majority of the human race, by an almost endless variety of deities. As if creation were not sufficiently profuse, vanity has excited a host of inventive and degenerate minds to form images, of every shape and size, exhibiting the horrid, the ludicrous, and the obscene. Satan has employed his agency, with fatal success, in erasing every vestige of religious impression from the minds of the Bechuanas, Hottentots, and Bushmen; leaving them without a single ray to guide them from the dark and dread futurity, or a single link to unite them with the skies.

I have often wished to find something, by

which I could lay hold on the minds of the natives,—an altar to an unknown God, the faith of their ancestors, the immortality of the soul, or any religious association ; but nothing of this kind ever floated in their minds. “They looked upon the sun,” as Mr. Campbell very graphically said, “with the eyes of an ox.”

To tell them, the gravest of them, that there was a Creator, the governor of the heavens and earth, of the fall of man, or the redemption of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and immortality beyond the grave, was to tell them what appeared to be more fabulous, extravagant, and ludicrous than their own vain stories about lions, hyenas, and jackals. To tell them that these were articles of our faith, would extort an interjection of superlative surprise, as if they were too preposterous for the most foolish to believe.

What they heard was all right, provided they got a bit of tobacco, or some little equivalent for their time—a thing of no value to them—which they spent in hearing one talk. Some would even make a trade of telling the missionary that they prayed, by which means God directed them to their lost cattle, at a few

yards' distance, after having been in search of them several days ; and that in the same way he had brought game within reach of their spears. Replies to questions as to what they thought of the word of God, were very cheap ; and if they supposed that by such means they had obtained favour and respect, their success would be the subject of merriment in their own circles. Some individuals, to my knowledge, who had carried on this deception in the early period of the mission, many years afterwards boasted how expert they had been in thus gulling the missionary.

A wily rain-maker, who was the oracle of the village in which he dwelt, once remarked, after hearing me enlarge on the subject of creation, "If you verily believe that that Being created all men, then, according to reason, you must also believe that in making white people he has improved on his work ; He tried his hand on Bushmen first, and he did not like them, because they were so ugly, and their language like that of the frogs. He then tried his hand on the Hottentots, but these did not please him either. He then exercised his power and skill and made the Bechuanas, which was a great improvement ; and

at last he made the white people ; therefore," exulting with an air of triumph at the discovery, "the white people are so much wiser than we are, in making walking-houses, (wagons,) teaching the oxen to draw them over hill and dale, and instructing them also to plough the gardens instead of making their wives do it, like the Bechuanas." His discovery received the applause of the people while the poor missionary's arguments, drawn from the source of Divine truth, were thrown into the shade. They were always so averse to reasoning on any subjects of this nature, that the missionary felt it quite a treat to meet with an individual who would enter into a discussion, even though with derision and scorn.

The government of the people partakes both of the monarchical and patriarchal, comparatively mild in its character. Each tribe has its chief or king, who commonly resides in the largest town, and is held sacred from his hereditary right to that office. A tribe generally includes a number of towns or villages, each having its distinct head, under whom there are a number of subordinate chiefs. These constitute the aristocracy of

the nation, and all acknowledge the supremacy of the principal one. His power, though very great, and in some instances despotic, is nevertheless controlled by the minor chiefs, who in their *pichos* or *pitshos*, their parliament, or public meetings, use the greatest plainness of speech in exposing what they consider culpable or lax in his government. An able speaker will sometimes turn the scale even against the king, if we may call him such.

I have heard him inveighed against for making women his senators and his wife prime minister, while the audience was requested to look at his body, and see if he were not getting too corpulent; a sure indication that his mind was little exercised in anxieties about the welfare of his people.

They had also many ceremonies, disgusting in themselves, and producing a degrading effect upon the minds of the natives.

These ceremonies were prodigious barriers to the gospel. Polygamy was another obstacle, and the Bechuanas, jealous of any diminution in their self-indulgence, by being deprived of the services of their wives, looked with an extremely suspicious eye on any in-

novation on this ancient custom. While going to war, hunting, watching the cattle, milking the cows, and preparing their furs and skins for mantles, was the work of the men, the women had by far the heavier task of agriculture, building the houses, fencing, bringing firewood, and heavier than all, nature's charge, the rearing of a family. The greater part of the year they are constantly employed; and during the season of picking and sowing their gardens, their task is galling, living on a coarse, scanty fare, and frequently having a babe fastened to their backs, while thus cultivating the ground.

The men, for obvious reasons, found it convenient to have a number of such vassals, rather than only one, while the women would be perfectly amazed at one's ignorance, were she to be told that she would be much happier in a single state, or widowhood, than being the mere concubine and drudge of a haughty husband, who spent the greater part of his life in lounging in the shade, while she was compelled, for his comfort as well as her own, to labour under the rays of an almost vertical sun, in a hot and withering climate. Their houses, which require considerable ingenuity as well

as hard labour, are entirely the work of the women, who are extremely thankful to carry home even the heavier timbers, if their husbands will take their axes and fell them in the thicket, which may be many miles distant. The centre of the conical roof will, in many houses, be eighteen feet high, and it requires no little scrambling, in the absence of ladders, for females to climb such a height; but the men pass and repass, and look on with the most perfect indifference, while it never enters their heads that their wife, their daughter, or their mother, may fall and break a leg or neck. These houses, though temporary, and requiring great labour to keep them constantly in repair, are nevertheless very well adapted to the climate. They admit little light, which is not desirable in a hot country, and among millions of house-flies; but during the winter season they are uncomfortably airy and cold.

While standing near the wife of one of the grandees, who with some female companions was building a house, and making preparations to scramble by means of a branch on to the roof, I remarked that they ought to get their husbands to do that part of the work.

This set them all into a roar of laughter. Mahuto, the queen, and several of the men, drawing near to ascertain the cause of the merriment, the wives repeated my strange, and, to them, ludicrous proposal, when another peal of mirth ensued. Mahuto, who was a sensible and shrewd woman, stated that the plan, though hopeless, was a good one, as she often thought our custom was much better than theirs. It was reasonable that women should attend to household affairs, and the lighter parts of labour, while man, wont to boast of his superior strength, should employ his energy in more laborious occupations; adding, she wished I would give their husbands medicine to make them do the work. This remark was made rather in the way of a joke. Poor woman, she little knew then that there was one whose omnipotent voice has declared, "I will put my Spirit into them, and create new hearts within them;" but now, blessed be His holy name, she, and hundreds more, have been publicly baptized into the faith of the gospel of the Son of God.

When we attempted to convince them of their state as sinners, they would boldly affirm, with full belief in their innate rectitude, that there

was not a sinner in the tribe, referring us to other nations whom they dreaded, or with whom they were at war; and especially the poor despised Bushmen. That they are less ferocious than some tribes, we admit; but this is saying little in commendation of those who could with impunity rob, murder, lie, and exchange wives.

When they are styled savages, the appellation should be understood in a restrictive sense, especially when compared with the Zoelu tribes to the east, who, as we shall yet have occasion to show, though they are not cannibals, would, in fiercest barbarity, vie with any of the inhabitants of the islands of the Pacific. The Bechuana character is frank and sociable, which, however, does not appear to arise from a benevolence of disposition, so much as from a degree of etiquette and habits, arising from relationship and locality. It has sometimes perfectly astounded the writer to see individuals who he had supposed were amiable and humane, when brought into certain positions, conduct as if in their native element, and wallow in crimes, which he expected they would naturally shudder to perpetrate. Having had long intercourse with many tribes,

he feels persuaded that what he has stated will be found a tolerably correct estimate of the Bechuana character. But although they are revengeful to the last degree, if an offender propitiate the injured party by a gift, at the same time confessing his error, or, as is common, put the blame on his heart, the most perfect unanimity and cordiality succeeds.

Mr. Thompson in his travels correctly remarks, that, "like most barbarians, their political wisdom consists in duplicity and petty cunning; and their ordinary wars were merely predatory incursions upon their weaker neighbours for the purpose of carrying off cattle, with as little exposure as possible of their own lives. Their expeditions against the Bushmen were peculiarly vindictive, and conducted with all the insidiousness and murderous ferocity, without the heroic intrepidity of American or New Zealand savages;" examples of this will occur hereafter. All these characteristics are only what the records of Divine truth authorize us to expect from those who walk according to the prince of the power of the air. The inspired description given in Rom. iii. 10-18, is the real transcript of the condition of a people who have no fear of God

before their eyes. Both ancient and modern missionaries have found it so ; and whoever goes to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the heathen, goes on a warfare which requires all prayer and supplication, to keep his armour bright, and in active operation, to wrestle and struggle, and toil, in pulling down the strongholds of Satan, whether in Africa, India, the islands of the Pacific, or in the wilds of America.

They had no ideas of religion. It was for some time thought that a term was used by them which meant a Supreme being, but it was afterwards found to be the name of one of their kings, by whom they swore.

In the midst of a thunder-storm they would shoot their poisoned arrows at the lightning to kill it.

For the name of "God," the missionaries introduced the word *Morimo*, the same that was used for the purpose by the Kafirs and Hottentots. Mr. Moffat says :

One of the most convincing proofs that the minds of the people are covered by the profoundest darkness is, that after the missionary has endeavoured for hours to impart to them a knowledge of the Divine Being, they not

unfrequently address to him the question, "What is it you wish to tell me?" And if any thing were wanting to confirm this conviction, surely this fact will be sufficient, that even where he has succeeded in conveying to the vacant mind of the savage, ideas which he considers as paramount to all others, he is told that certainly these fables are very wonderful, but not more so than their own.

Inquiring one day of a group of natives whom I had been addressing, if any of them had previously known that Great Being which had been described to them; among the whole party I found only one old woman, who said that she remembered hearing the name Morimo when she was a child, but was not told what the thing was. Indeed, even in towns, the general reply on that subject is, that these are things about which the old people can speak; but as they are not in the habit of instructing the rising generation on such topics, it is easy to see how even these vague notions become extinct altogether, as they have in many parts of the country. Nor is it surprising that a chief, after listening attentively to me while he stood leaning on his spear, should utter an exclamation of amazement,

that a man whom he accounted wise should tell such fables for truths. Calling about thirty of his men, who stood near him, to approach, he addressed them, pointing to me: "There is Ra-Mary, (Father of Mary,) who tells me, that the heavens were made, the earth also, by a beginner, whom he calls Morimo. Have you ever heard any thing to be compared with this? He says that the sun rises and sets by the power of Morimo; as also that Morimo causes winter to follow summer, the winds to blow, the rain to fall, the grass to grow, and the trees to bud;" and casting his arm above and around him, added, "God works in every thing you see or hear! Did ever you hear such words?" Seeing them ready to burst into laughter, he said, "Wait, I shall tell you more; Ra-Mary tells me that we have spirits in us, which will never die; and that our bodies, though dead and buried, will rise and live again. Open your ears to-day; did you ever hear litlamane (fables) like these?" This was followed by a burst of deafening laughter, and on its partially subsiding, the chief man begged me to say no more on such trifles, lest the people should think me mad!

But it is to the testimony of such as have been brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, that we must look for decisive evidence on this point. The following is one example out of many which could be given. The question being put to one whose memory was tenacious as his judgment was enlightened, "How did you feel in your natural state, before hearing the gospel? How did you feel upon retiring from private as well as public crimes, and laying your head on the silent pillow? Were there no fears in your breast, no spectres before your eyes, no conscience accusing you of having done wrong? No palpitations, no dread of futurity?" "No," said he. "How could we feel, or how could we fear? We had no idea that an unseen eye saw us, or that an unseen ear heard us. What could we know beyond ourselves, or of another world, before life and immortality were brought to us by the word of God." This declaration was followed by a flood of tears, while he added, "You found us beasts, and not men."

Among the tribes, and especially those nearer to the coast, some customs remain which are thought to have a reference to sac-

rifices, offerings, and purifications; such as might be expected to be found among people descending from the East, as all the Bechuana tribes appear to have done. In many instances, their slaughtering of animals on occasions of a tree being struck with lightning, or to procure rain, or to restore the sick, may be easily traced to the inventive brain of wily rain-makers, who, in such a case, as at their public festivals and ceremonies, never lose sight of their stomachs. One will try to coax the sickness out of a chieftain by setting him astride an ox, with its feet and legs tied; and then smothering the animal by holding its nose in a large bowl of water. A feast follows, and the ox is devoured, sickness and all. A sorcerer will pretend he cannot find out the guilty person, or where the malady of another lies, till he has got him to kill an ox, on which he manœuvres, by cutting out certain parts. Another doctor will require a goat, which he kills over the sick person, allowing the blood to run down the body; another will require the fat of the kidney of a fresh slaughtered goat, saying, that any old fat will not do; and thus he comes in for his chop. These slaughtering are prescribed according to the wealth

of the individual, so that a stout ox might be a cure for a slight cold in a chieftain, while a kid would be a remedy for a fever among the poor, among whom there was no chance of obtaining any thing greater. The above ceremonies might with little difficulty be construed into sacrifices, if we felt anxious to increase the number of traditionary remains. Is it, however, to be wondered at among a pastoral people, whose choicest viand is broiled or boiled meat, and to whom fat of any kind is like the richest cordials, that they should solemnize every event or circumstance with beef? When a covenant is made between parties, or a mutual treaty entered into, one animal, or more, must be killed, and, like Jacob and Laban of old, they eat together.

The ceremonies to be found among the Bechuanas, apparently of Mosaic or patriarchal origin, are found upon examination to be like shells without the kernel. Whatever may have been their origin, they have merged into the ordinary habits of savage life, and centuries ago lost the last vestiges of the tradition of their original design. Happy for us that we have not been left to feel after God among the distant orbs of heaven, or amid the diver-

sified displays of power and skill in our own world. "If therefore natural theology is rightly defined to be, that which is attainable by the light of nature only, then all who have the light of nature, and the use of reason, are capable of attaining it; otherwise, the definition will be false and imperfect. The general character of man will hold true that he is without knowledge, till he receives instruction, and without conscience, till informed what the will of God is."



CHAPTER VIII.

The Natives stealing from the Missionaries—Acquiring the language—Encouraging circumstance—The rain-maker—Burials.

AFTER Mr. Moffat had been labouring *five* years among these ignorant and degraded Africans, he was ready to faint with discouragement. The natives would yet steal from the missionaries, and even threaten violence if they could not have their own way.

Mrs. Moffat, with a babe in her arms, begged, and that very humbly, of a woman, just to be kind enough to move out of a temporary kitchen, that she might shut it up, as usual before going into the place of worship. The woman, a plebeian, seized a piece of wood to hurl it at Mrs. Moffat's head, who, of course, immediately escaped to the house of God, leaving her the undisputed occupant of the kitchen, any of the contents of which she would not hesitate to appropriate to her own

use. It required no little fortitude and forbearance in the wife of the missionary, who had to keep at home, and attend to the cares and duties of a family, to have the house crowded with those who would seize a stone, and dare interference on her part. As many men and women as pleased might come into our hut, leaving us not room even to turn ourselves, and making every thing they touched the colour of their own greasy red attire ; while some were talking, others would be sleeping, and some pilfering whatever they could lay their hands upon. As it was not pleasant to take our meals among such filth, our dinner was often deferred for hours, hoping for their departure ; but, after all, it had to be eaten when the natives were butchering their game at our feet. The attendance at public worship would vary from one to forty ; and these very often manifesting the greatest indecorum. Some would be snoring ; others laughing ; some working ; and others, who might even be styled the better sort, would be employed in removing from their ornaments certain nameless insects, letting them run about the seats while sitting by the missionary's wife. Never having been accustomed to chairs or stools, some,

by way of imitation, would sit with their feet on the benches, having their knees, according to their usual mode of sitting, drawn up to their chins. In this position one would fall asleep and tumble over, to the great merriment of his fellows. On some occasions an opportunity would be watched to rob, when the missionary was engaged in public service. The thief would just put his head within the door, discover who was in the pulpit, and, knowing he could not leave that place before a certain time had elapsed, would go to his house and take what he could lay his hands upon. When Mr. Hamilton and I met in the evening, we almost always had some tale to tell about our losses, but never about our gains, except those of resignation, and peace, the results of patience, and faith in the unchangeable purposes of Jehovah. "I will be exalted among the heathen," cheered our baffled and drooping spirits.

Some nights, or rather mornings, we had to record thefts committed in the course of twenty-four hours in our houses, our smithshop, our garden, and among our cattle in the field. These they have more than once driven into a bog or mire, at a late hour, informing us

of the accident, as they termed it; and, as it was then too dark to render assistance, one or more would fall a prey to the hyenas or hungry natives. One night they entered our cattle-fold, killed one of our best draught oxen, and carried the whole away except one shoulder. We were compelled to use much meat, from the great scarcity of grain and vegetables; our sheep we had to purchase at a distance; and very thankful, if, out of twenty, we secured the largest half for ourselves. They would break their legs, cut off their tails, and more frequently carry off the whole carcass. Tools, such as saws, axes, and adzes, were losses severely felt, as we could not at that time replace them.

Very often, when employed working at a distance from the house, if there was no one in whom he could confide, the missionary would be compelled to carry all the knives and spoons to the place where he went to seek a draught of water, well knowing that if they were left, they would be gone before he could return.

The acquisition of the language was an object of the first importance. This was to be done under circumstances the most unfavourable, as

there was neither time nor place of retirement for study, and no interpreter worthy the name. A few, and but a few words were collected, and these very incorrect, from the ignorance of the interpreter of the grammatical structure either of his own or the Dutch language, through which medium all our intercourse was carried on. It was something like groping in the dark, and many were the ludicrous blunders I made. The more waggish of those from whom I occasionally obtained sentences and forms of speech, would richly enjoy the fun, if they succeeded in leading me into egregious mistakes and shameful blunders; but though I had to pay dear for my credulity, I learned something. After being compelled to attend to every species of manual, and frequently menial, labour for the whole day, working under a burning sun, standing on the saw-pit, labouring at the anvil, treading clay, or employed in cleaning a water-ditch, it may be imagined that I was in no very fit condition for study, even when a quiet hour could be obtained in the evening for that purpose. And this was not all; an efficient interpreter could not be found in the country; and when every thing was ready for inquiry, the native mind,

unaccustomed to such efforts, would, after a few questions, be completely bewildered.

A missionary who commences giving direct instruction to the natives, though far from being competent in the language, is proceeding on safer ground than if he were employing an interpreter, who is not proficient in both languages, and who has not a tolerable understanding of the doctrines of the gospel. Trusting to an ignorant and unqualified interpreter, is attended with consequences not only ludicrous, but dangerous to the very objects which lie nearest to the missionary's heart. The natives will smile, and make allowances for the blundering speeches of the missionary; and though some may convey the very opposite meaning to that which he intends, they know from his general character what it should be, and ascribe the blunder to his ignorance of the language. They are not so charitable towards his interpreter, whose interest it is to make them believe that he is master of a language of which they know nothing, and consequently they take for granted that all is correct which comes through his lips. I have been very much troubled in my mind on hearing that the most erroneous renderings have

been given to what I had said. Since acquiring the language, I have had opportunities of discovering this with my own ears, by hearing sentences translated, which at one moment were calculated to excite no more than a smile, while others would produce intense agony of mind from their bordering on blasphemy, and which the interpreter gave as the word of God.

This was one of the great trials of the mission, while the heathen laughed at our puny efforts to reform the nation. They had boasted that our Jesus and Jehovah, of whom we liked to talk so frequently, should never get one convert to bow the knee to their sway; and now these boasts were reiterated with epithets of contumely and scorn. Sometimes a cheering ray would pierce through the thick gloom which hung over our prospects, in the form of a kind word or action on the part of a chief or person of influence, though that was generally either the precursor of a favour to be asked, or a return for one granted. We needed the graces of faith and patience, and but for Almighty support, we must have fainted and fallen in the struggle.

A circumstance, giving some comfort to the missionaries, now occurred.

“We had been exceedingly tried by the conduct of Fransinna, a Hottentot woman, from Bethelsdorp. She had taken offence at our having sent away a young Hottentot in our service, on account of immoral conduct, which disgraced the mission in the eyes of the Bechuanas. She took this opportunity of instigating the king and his people against us, by insinuating that we had ascribed it to Mothi, who, of course, was hurt at being charged with that which was our own act. While her unchristian and violent spirit was threatening the overthrow of the mission, she was suddenly seized with a remarkable distemper, which prostrated her in a short time on a bed of sickness. She was visited and faithfully dealt with.

“Her conduct in endeavouring to frustrate our efforts among the Bechuanas was set before her in its true colours. She was soon thoroughly convinced of the guilt of such hostility, and of the reasonableness of the step on our part which had excited her displeasure. She frankly confessed her crimes, was cut to the heart for the injury she had done to the cause, and earnestly implored forgiveness, when she was directed afresh to the

fountain opened for sin. She remained several months in severe affliction, and about a month before her death, one of her legs from the knee was consigned to the dust, the rest of her limbs meanwhile gradually decaying; but while worms were literally destroying her body, she knew in whom she had believed. From the commencement of her affliction, the Lord had made her to feel that he had a controversy with her, and thrice happy was it for her that she heard the rod and Him who had appointed it. She acknowledged that for some time previous she had wandered from God, and had done things to the grief of our souls and the injury of the cause: she also said that she had used her endeavours to persuade her husband and the other Hottentots to abandon the station and return home, and that in the midst of her fiery opposition to us, the Lord laid his hand upon her. She had thus been brought to a sense of her danger, and to have recourse to the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. She made a full, free, and public confession of all her iniquity; and a short time before her death, remembering again the injury she had attempted to do by endeavouring to persuade the men to

abandon the mission, she called them together to her bedside, and, as her dying request, entreated them not to leave the missionaries, however accumulated their privations might be; adding, that it was at their peril if they deserted them. During the whole of her illness not a murmur escaped her lips. Resting on the righteousness of Christ, she gloried in his cross. A lively gratitude to God, who had redeemed her, beamed forth in her whole demeanour, and when we were called to witness her last struggle with the king of terrors, we beheld, with feelings no tongue can utter, the calmness and serenity of her mind in the lively anticipation of immortal glory, and saw her breathe her last. Thus, as with captive Israel of old, 'our God did lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.'"

The sorcerers, or rain-makers, were among the most formidable enemies of the missionaries.

The rain-maker is in the estimation of the people no mean personage, possessing an influence over the minds of the people superior even to that of their king, who is likewise compelled to yield to the dictates of this arch-

official. Each tribe has one, and sometimes more, who are also doctors and sextons, or the superintendents of the burying of the dead, it being generally believed that that ceremony has some influence over the watery treasures which float in the skies. He will sometimes give orders, that none of the dead must be buried, but dragged to a distance from the town to be devoured by the hyenas and jackals. One old woman died in her house, not far from our premises; we dared not commit the body to the dust, and having no friend to perform the needful duty, her son was called from a distance. From their national horror of a corpse, he tied a thong to her leg, avoiding the touch of that form which gave him birth, dragged the corpse to some bushes, and left the thong, because it had been in contact with the body of his mother! Though the bodies of the poor are habitually exposed, the orders of the rain-maker apply to all, because if any were buried it would not rain. This shows that, in their ceremonies connected with burying the dead, there is no reference to pleasing the spirits of the departed; on the contrary, a rain-maker himself contended that there were no such

existences. "What is the difference," he asked me, pointing to his dog, "between me and that animal? You say I am immortal, and why not my dog or my ox? They die, and do you see their souls? What is the difference between man and the beasts? None, except that man is the greater rogue of the two." Such was that wise man's view of man's dignity and man's immortality. Yet, notwithstanding this low estimate, when a person was buried, a privilege granted to the more noble, it was attended to with scrupulous minuteness.

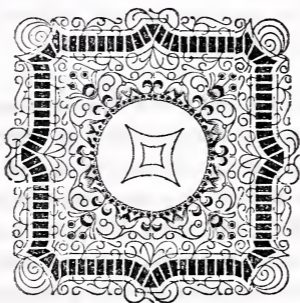
The following is a brief sketch of the ceremony of interment, and the custom which prevails among these tribes in reference to the dying. When they see any indications of approaching dissolution in fainting fits or convulsive throes, they throw a net over the body, and hold it in a sitting posture, with the knees brought in contact with the chin, till life is gone. The grave, which is frequently made in the fence surrounding the cattle-fold, or in the fold itself, if for a man, is about three feet in diameter, and six feet deep. The body is not conveyed through the gate, but an opening is made in the fence for that purpose. It

is carried to the grave, having the head covered with a skin, and is placed in a sitting posture. Much time is spent in order to fix the corpse exactly facing the north; and though they have no compass, they manage, after some consultation, to place it very nearly in the required position. Portions of an ant-hill are placed about the feet, when the net which held the body is gradually withdrawn; as the grave is filled up, the earth is handed in with bowls, while two men stand in the hole to tread it down round the body, great care being taken to pick out every thing like a root or pebble. When the earth reaches the height of the mouth, a small twig or branch of an acacia is thrown in, and on the top of the head a few roots of grass are placed; and when the grave is nearly filled, another root of grass is fixed immediately above the head, part of which stands above ground. When finished, the men and women stoop, and with their hands scrape the loose soil around on to the little mound. A large bowl of water, with an infusion of bulbs, is then brought, when the men and women wash their hands and the upper part of their feet, shouting "pùla, pùla," rain, rain. An old woman, probably a rela-

tion, will then bring his weapons, bows, arrows, war axe, and spears, also grain and garden-seeds of various kinds, and even the bone of an old pack-ox, with other things, and address the grave, saying, "there are all your articles." These are then taken away, and bowls of water are poured on the grave, when all retire, the women wailing, "yo, yo, yo," with some doleful dirge, sorrowing without hope.

These ceremonies vary in different localities, and according to the rank of the individual who is committed to the dust. It is remarkable that they should address the dead; and I have eagerly embraced this season to convince them that if *they* did not believe in the immortality of the soul, it was evident from this, to them now unmeaning custom, that their ancestors once did. Some would admit this might possibly have been the case, but doubted whether they could have been so foolish. But with few exceptions among such a people, argument soon closes, or is turned into ridicule, and the great difficulty presents itself of producing conviction where there is no reflection. When we would appeal to the supposed influence of the dead body in neu-

tralizing the rain-maker's medicines for producing rain, and inquire how such an influence operated, the reply would be, "The rain-maker says so."



CHAPTER IX.

Cunning of a rain-maker—Is sent for to bring rain—Finds it hard work—Wants a baboon, then the heart of a lion—Orders the missionaries away—The natives determine to murder the rain-maker—He is spared, and departs.

YEARS of drought had been severely felt, and the natives, tenacious of their faith in the potency of a man, held a council, and passed resolutions to send for a rain-maker of renown from the Bahurutsi tribe, 200 miles north-east of the Kuruman station. It was natural to suppose that the offer must be a tempting one which could draw him from a post so lucrative, and where he had so signalized his boasted powers. The Bechuanas possess very inventive minds ; and when they have a point to gain, as truth and honour are never regarded, they find no difficulty in embellishing their story. The ambassadors received

their commission with the strictest injunction not to return without the man. No doubt many were their cogitations on the journey how they might best succeed. Promises were cheap, and with a redundance of the fairest kind, they succeeded beyond expectation. This, however, was not surprising, when they assured him that, if he would only come to the land of the Batlapis, and open the heavens, which had become as hard as a stone, cause the rains to fall and quench the flaming ground, he should be made the greatest man that ever lived; his riches should be beyond all calculation; his flocks covering the hills and plains; he should wash his hands in milk, while all would exalt him in the song, and mothers and children would call him blessed. When a period had elapsed sufficient to allow the messengers time to return, it was rumored through the town, that they had been murdered, a common event in those days. The gloom which this cast over the native mind, formed a striking contrast to the dazzling rays pouring forth from an almost vertical sun blazing in a cloudless sky. The heavens had been as brass, scarcely a cloud had been seen for months, even on the distant

horizon. Suddenly a shout was raised, and the whole town was in motion. The rain-maker was approaching. Every voice was raised to the highest pitch with acclamations of enthusiastic joy. He had sent a harbinger to announce his approach, with peremptory orders for all the inhabitants to wash their feet. Every one seemed to fly in swiftest obedience to the adjoining river. Noble and ignoble, even the girl who attended to our kitchen fire, ran. Old and young ran. It seemed as if nothing could have stopped them. By this time the clouds began to gather, and a crowd went out to welcome the mighty man who, as they imagined, was now collecting in the heavens his stores of rain.

Just as he was descending the height into the town, the immense concourse danced and shouted, so that the very earth rang, and at the same time the lightnings darted, and the thunders roared in awful grandeur. A few heavy drops fell, which produced the most thrilling ecstasy on the deluded multitude, whose shouting baffled all description. Faith hung upon the lips of the impostor, while he proclaimed aloud that this year the women must cultivate gardens on the hills, and not in

the valleys, for these would be deluged. After the din had somewhat subsided, a few individuals came to our dwellings to treat us and our doctrines with derision. "Where is your God?" one asked with a sneer. We were silent, because the wicked were before us. "Have you not seen our Morimo? Have you not beheld him cast from his arm his fiery spears, and rend the heavens? Have you not heard with your ears his voice in the clouds?" adding with an interjection of supreme disgust, "You talk of Jehovah, and Jesus, what can they do?" Never in my life do I remember a text being brought home with such power as the words of the Psalmist: "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen." Then truly the enemy came in as a flood, and it became us to take refuge in the Most High, to be enabled to lift up a standard against him. In conducting our evening service, my mind was powerfully directed to Psalm xcvi. 2, "Clouds and darkness are round about him," etc.

It was natural for us to calculate on our already dark course becoming more gloomy still, from the excitement which the magic powers of the rain-maker could produce with

a masterly hand. He had before his reception among his new friends been particularly informed of the character and objects of the missionaries, which his discerning mind would soon discover stood in fearful opposition to his own. The rain-makers, as I have since had frequent opportunities of observing, were men of no common calibre, and it was the conviction of their natural superiority of genius, which emboldened them to lay the public mind prostrate before the reveries of their fancies. Being foreigners, they generally amplified prodigiously on their former feats. The present one, as has been noticed, was above the common order. He kept the chiefs and nobles gazing on him with silent amazement, while the demon of mendacity enriched his themes with lively imagery, making them fancy they saw their corn-fields floating in the breeze, and their flocks and herds return lowing homewards by noonday from the abundance of pasture. He had in his wrath desolated the cities of the enemies of his people, by stretching forth his hand, and commanding the clouds to burst upon them. He had arrested the progress of a powerful army, by causing a flood to descend, which formed a

mighty river, and arrested their course. These, and many other pretended supernatural displays of his power, were received as sober truths. The report of his fame spread like wild-fire, and the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes came to pay him homage. We scarcely knew whether to expect from him open hostility, secret machinations, or professed friendship. He, like all of his profession, was a thinking and calculating soul, in the habit of studying human nature, affable, engaging, with an acute eye, and exhibiting a dignity of mien, with an ample share of self-esteem, which, notwithstanding all his obsequiousness, he could not hide. He waited upon us, and it was well; for though we wished at all times to become all things to all men, he would have grown old before we could have constrained ourselves to pay court to one, who, under the influence of the great enemy of souls, had reached the very pinnacle of fame. He found we were men of peace, and would not quarrel. For the sake of obtaining a small piece of tobacco, he would occasionally pay us a visit, and even enter the place of worship. He was also studious not to give offence, while in the course of conversation he would

give a feeble assent to our views, as to the sources of that element over which he pretended to have a sovereign control. He said he was poor, and this fact, to thinking minds, would have proved that his successful achievements must have been either gratuitous or ill rewarded. When I put a question on the subject to one of his admirers, in order to excite suspicion, the reply was, "The Bahurutsis," the people from whom he came, "are stingy; they never reward people for their services."

It might be briefly noticed, that in order to carry on the fraud, he would, when clouds appeared, order the women neither to plant nor sow, lest they should be scared away. He would also require them to go to the fields, and gather certain roots and herbs, with which he might light what appeared to the natives mysterious fires. Elate with hope, they would go in crowds to the hills and dales, gather herbs, and return to the town with songs, and lay their gatherings at his feet. With these he would sometimes proceed to certain hills, and raise smoke; gladly would he have raised the wind also, if he could have done so, well knowing that the latter is frequently the pre-

cursor of rain. These people practised their deceptions, not self-deceived in their supposed powers. I met one among the Barolongs, who, from some service I had done him, thought me very kind, and, before he knew my character, became very intimate. He had derived benefit from some of my medicines, and consequently viewed me as a doctor and one of his own fraternity. In reply to some of my remarks, he said, "It is only wise men who can be rain-makers, for it requires very great wisdom to deceive so many;" adding, "you and I know that." At the same time he gave me a broad hint that I must not remain there, lest I should interfere with his field of labour.

The rain-maker found the clouds in our country rather harder to manage than those he had left. He complained that secret rogues were disobeying his proclamations. When urged to make repeated trials, he would reply, "You only give me sheep and goats to kill; therefore I can only make goat-rain: give me fat slaughter oxen, and I shall let you see ox-rain." One day, as he was taking a sound sleep, a shower fell, on which one of the principal men entered his house to congratulate

him, but, to his utter amazement, found him totally insensible to what was transpiring. "Héla ka rare, (Halloo, by my father,) I thought you were making rain," said the intruder, when, arising from his slumbers, and seeing his wife sitting on the floor shaking a milk-sack in order to obtain a little butter to anoint her hair, he replied, pointing to the operation of churning, "Do you not see my wife churning rain as fast as she can?" This reply gave entire satisfaction, and it presently spread through the length and breadth of the town, that the rain-maker had churned the shower out of a milk-sack. The moisture caused by this shower was dried up by a scorching sun, and many long weeks followed without a single cloud, and when these did appear, they might sometimes be seen, to the great mortification of the conjuror, to discharge their watery treasures at a distance. This disappointment was increased when a heavy cloud would pass over with tremendous thunder, but not one drop of rain. There had been several successive years of drought, during which water had not been seen to flow upon the ground; and in that climate, if rain does not fall continuously and in considerable

quantities, it is all exhaled in a couple of hours. In digging graves we have found the earth as dry as dust at four or five feet depth, when the surface was saturated with rain.

The women had cultivated extensive fields, but the seed was lying in the soil as it had been thrown from the hand; the cattle were dying from want of pasture, and hundreds of living skeletons were seen going to the fields in quest of unwholesome roots and reptiles, while many were dying with hunger. Our sheep, as before stated, were soon likely to be all devoured, and finding their number daily diminish, we slaughtered the remainder, and put the meat in salt, which of course was far from being agreeable in such a climate, and where vegetables were so scarce.

All these circumstances irritated the rain-maker very much; but he was often puzzled to find something on which to lay the blame, for he had exhausted his skill. One night a small cloud passed over, and the only flash of lightning, from which a heavy peal of thunder burst, struck a tree in the town. Next day the rain-maker and a number of people assembled to perform the usual ceremony on such an event. It was ascended, and ropes of grass

and grass roots were bound round different parts of the trunk, which in the *Acacia giraffe* is seldom much injured. A limb may be torn off, but of numerous trees of that species which I have seen struck by lightning, the trunk appears to resist its power, as the fluid produces only a stripe or groove along the bark to the ground. When these bandages were made, he deposited some of his nostrums, and got quantities of water handed up, which he poured with great solemnity on the wounded tree, while the assembled multitude shouted, "*Pùla, pùla.*" This done, the tree was hewn down, dragged out of the town, and burned to ashes. Soon after this unmeaning ceremony, he got large bowls of water, with which was mingled an infusion of bulbs. All the men of the town then came together, and passed in succession before him, when he sprinkled each with a zebra's tail, which he dipped in the water.

As all this and much more did not succeed, he had recourse to another stratagem. He knew well that baboons were not very easily caught among the rocky glens and shelving precipices; therefore, in order to gain time, he informed the men that, to make rain, he must

have a baboon : that the animal must be without a blemish, not a hair was to be wanting on its body. One would have thought any simpleton might have seen through his tricks, as their being able to present him with a baboon in that state was impossible, even though they caught him asleep. Forth sallied a band of chosen runners, who ascended the neighbouring mountains. The baboons, from their lofty domiciles, had been in the habit of looking down on the plain beneath, at the natives encircling and pursuing the quaggas and antelopes, little dreaming that one day they would themselves be objects of pursuit. They hobbled off in consternation, screaming and leaping from rock to rock, occasionally looking down on their pursuers, grinning and gnashing their teeth.

After a long pursuit, with wounded limbs, scratched bodies, and broken toes, a young one was secured and brought to the town, the captors exulting as if they had obtained a great spoil. The wily rogue, on seeing the animal, put on a countenance exhibiting the most intense sorrow, exclaiming, "My heart is rent in pieces ; I am dumb with grief;" and pointing to the ear of the baboon, which was

scratched, and to the tail, which had lost some hairs, added, "Did I not tell you I could not make rain if there was one hair wanting?" After some days another was obtained; but there was still some imperfection, real or alleged. He had often said, that if they would procure him the heart of a lion, he would show them he could make rain so abundant that a man might think himself well off to be under shelter, as when it fell it might sweep whole towns away. He had discovered that the clouds required strong medicine, and that a lion's heart would do the business. To obtain this, the rain-maker well knew, was no easy matter. One day it was announced that a lion had attacked one of the cattle outposts, not far from the town; and a party set off for the twofold purpose of getting a key to the clouds and disposing of a dangerous enemy. The orders were imperative, whatever the consequences might be, which, in this instance, might have been very serious, had not one of our men shot the terrific animal dead with a gun. This was no sooner done than it was cut up for roasting and boiling; no matter if it had previously eaten some of their relations, they ate it in its turn. Nothing could exceed

their enthusiasm when they returned to the town, bearing the lion's heart, and singing the conqueror's song in full chorus; the rain-maker prepared his medicines, kindled his fires, and might be seen upon the top of the hill, stretching forth his puny hands, and beckoning the clouds to draw near, or even shaking his spear, and threatening that if they disobeyed, they should feel his ire. The deluded populace believed all this, and wondered the rains would not fall. Asking an experienced and judicious man, the king's uncle, how it was that so great an operator on the clouds could not succeed, "Ah," he replied, with apparent feeling, "there is a cause for the hardheartedness of the clouds, if the rain-maker could only find it out." A scrutinizing watch was kept upon every thing done by the missionaries. Some weeks after my return from a visit to Griqua Town, a grand discovery was made, that the rain had been prevented by my bringing a bag of salt from that place in my wagon. The charge was made by the king and his attendants, with great gravity and form. As giving the least offence, by laughing at their puerile actions, ought always to be avoided when dealing with a people who

are sincere, though deluded, the case was on my part investigated with more than usual solemnity. Mothibi and his aid-de-camp accompanied me to the store-house, where the identical bag stood. It was open, with the white contents full in view. "There it is," he exclaimed, with an air of satisfaction. But finding, on examination, that the reported salt was only white clay or chalk, they could not help laughing at their own credulity.

We pointed out to them their delusion, and our only wonder was that we had not been accused before ; we had heard whisperings that we were not guiltless of the great drought. We tried both in public and in private to impress them with the sublime truths of creation, providence, and redemption, but the universal reply was, "maka héla," only lies. In a conversation with Mothibi, and the rain-maker, and a few others, I remarked, in reference to some insinuations, that I should with great pleasure meet him before an assembly of the people, and discuss the subject. To this he at first consented, but soon afterwards retracted, for this reason, that the subject which we should have to discuss was far too high for the people,

being what only rain-makers and wise men could talk about.

The people at last became impatient, and poured forth their curses against brother Hamilton and myself as the cause of all their sorrows. Our bell which was rung for public worship, they said, frightened the clouds; our prayers came in also for a share of the blame. "Don't you," said the chief rather fiercely to me, "bow down in your houses, and pray and talk to something bad in the ground?" A council was held, and restrictions were to be laid on all our actions. We refused compliance, urging that the spot on which the mission premises stood, had been given to the missionaries. The rain-maker appeared to avoid accusing us openly; he felt some sense of obligation, his wife having experienced that my medicines and treatment did her more good than all his nostrums. He would occasionally visit our humble dwellings, and when I happened to be in the smith's shop, he would look on most intently when he saw a piece of iron welded, or an instrument made, and tell me privately he wished I were living among his people, assuring me that there was plenty of timber and iron there.

One day he came and sat down, with a face evincing inward dissatisfaction. On making inquiry, I found, as I had heard whispered the day before, that all was not right; the public voice was sounding alarms in his ears. He inquired how the women were in our country; and supposing he wished to know what they were like, I pointed him to my wife, adding, that there were some taller, and some shorter than she was. "That is not what I mean," he replied; "I want to know what part they take in public affairs, and how they act when they do so." I replied, "that when the women of my country had occasion to take an active part in any public affairs, they carried all before them;" adding, in a jocose strain, "wait till we missionaries get the women on our side, as they now are on yours, and there will be no more rain-makers in the country." At this remark he looked at me as if I had just risen out of the earth. "May that time never arrive!" he cried, with a countenance expressive of unusual anxiety. I replied, "that the time would assuredly come, for Jehovah, the mighty God, had spoken it." He was evidently chagrined, for he had come for advice. "What am I to do?"

he inquired; "I wish all the women were men; I can get on with the men, but I cannot manage the women." I viewed this as a delicate moment, and, feeling the need of caution, replied, "that the women had just cause to complain; he had promised them rain, but the land was dust, their gardens burned up, and were I a woman, I would complain as loudly as any of them." To his inquiry, "What am I to do to pacify them?" I recommended him to be an honest man, and confess that he had been misleading himself as well as the public. "They will kill me," he said. I repeated my advice, "Be honest," adding, that if he were in any danger, we would do what we could to save him. He arose, and retired with a sorrowful countenance, leaving Mr. Hamilton and myself to draw our own conclusions. Of one thing we were persuaded, that a storm was gathering, not such a one, however, as would cover the hills and valleys with verdure, and the fields with corn, but one which might sweep away the desire of our hearts, in breaking up the mission. At such seasons we were enabled by faith to realize the consoling assurance, "The Lord of

hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

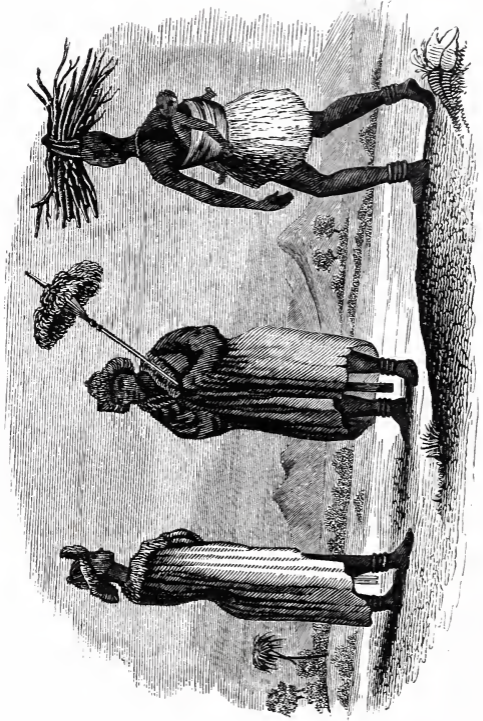
Shortly after, we accidentally heard that some one was to be speared. Violent as the natives sometimes were against us, we did not suspect injury was intended to ourselves. We imagined it was the poor rain-maker, and though we felt anxious by any means to save his life, the great difficulty was to find out whether he was to be the victim; for though we had several of their people about us, and the council chamber was in the open air exposed to all, it was a difficult matter to discover secrets of that description. Anxious to save life, which the Bechuanas will sometimes allow to be redeemed, it occurred to me that a very simple stratagem might unveil the mystery; I knew an individual of influence who was likely to know the affair. She was often ailing, and, like all the natives, fond of medicines, for among such a people a doctor is always welcome, especially if he asks no fee. My inquiries about the state of her health, and the expression of sympathy, were most acceptable, and the moment I saw her well pleased, I asked, as if it were a well-known fact, “Why are they thinking of killing the rain-

maker? they surely do not intend to eat him. Why not let the poor man go to his own land?" She very abruptly asked, "Who told you?" Rising, I said, "That is all I want to know;" when she called out after me, "Do not tell that I told you, or they will kill me." I entered the public fold, where about thirty of the principal men sat in secret council; it was a council of death. Had I put the question whether they really intended to commit that deed, they would have gazed on me with utter amazement, that I should have harboured such a suspicion, and have sworn, by all their forefathers that ever lived, that they had no such intention. I asked no question, but charged them with the fact, pointing out the magnitude of the crime of adding sin to sin, thus provoking Jehovah, by placing a man on His throne, and then killing him, because he was unable to do what they wished him to perform. I then pleaded hard that his life might be spared, and he allowed to return to his own country in peace. His life was spared, and Mothibi, after conducting him over the plain towards the Matluarin river, returned, leaving him to make the best of his way home.

CHAPTER X.

War among the natives—Mr. Moffat visits Cape Town—Surprise of the chiefs—Return—Another journey—Natural wells—Children for sale—Makaba receives them—His astonishment at the resurrection.

THE departure of the rain-maker did not deliver the missionaries from all their enemies. The evils which the people suffered were laid to the charge of their teachers ; and sometimes they were ordered to take their leave. But they returned good for evil. An opportunity soon occurred for Mr. Moffat to render a great service to the poor people with whom he was dwelling. For a year past, reports had come to their ears that a mighty woman, of the name of Mantatee, was at the head of an invincible army, numerous as the locusts, marching onward among the interior nations, carrying devastation and ruin wherever she went ; that she nourished the army



Pages 169 & 170.

with her own milk, sent out hornets before it, and, in one word, was laying the world desolate. Concluding that these might be only rumors of a destructive war carrying on by Chaka, the tyrant of the Zoolus, and that he was at too great a distance from us to affect our operations, I resolved, (says Mr. Moffat,) on a journey which I had been contemplating for some months. This was to visit Makaba, the chief of the Bauangketsi, a powerful tribe, situated upwards of two hundred miles north-east of Lithako. I had various reasons for taking this step. The Batlapis, and the neighbouring tribes were living in constant dread of an attack from so powerful an enemy.

“About this time, receiving an invitation from Makaba, the path of duty was plain ; but Mothibi, and indeed all the people, were greatly opposed to my design. Every thing injurious to the character of the Bauangketsi was raked up and placed before me. All the imaginary and real murders Makaba had ever committed were set in array, and every one swore by their king and their fathers, that if I went my doom was fixed, for I should never return, and therefore Ma-Mary and the two children might leave and return to our friends

in England, for she would never see me again. We, with Mr. Hamilton, had deliberated together, and prayed over the subject, and were not dismayed by their representations. When the day arrived for my departure, Mothibi, finding he could not prevail by arguments, positively forbade those under his control to accompany me. Feeling no inclination to give up my intention, I started with such men as I had. On reaching Old Lithako, on the third day, I found the reports about the Mantatees somewhat revived, and the natives strongly advised me to proceed no farther than Nokaneng, about twenty miles distant. The reports being such as we had heard before, and knowing that they wished, by every means, to intimidate me, I proceeded on the following day, after having preached to a great number of the natives. On arriving at Nokaneng, I found that rumors had reached that place that the Barolongs, at Kunuana, about one hundred miles off, had been also attacked, and the towns were in the hands of the marauders; but as spies had been sent out to ascertain the truth, I remained, employing every opportunity afforded to impart instruction."

Mr. Moffat pursued his journey until he found it was indeed true that a vast horde of savages was coming to make war upon the Batlapis, and returning to his station, measures were taken for defence. Obtaining aid from the Griquas, they went out to meet the advancing army, whom they found encamped in immense numbers ; and so hostile and savage; that no efforts on the part of the missionaries to bring them to a parley were successful. When they drew near to make overtures of peace, which they did on foot and unarmed, the enemy would rush towards them with clubs and spears to destroy them.

An engagement at length took place, and the mighty army of undisciplined natives was put to flight. Had it not been for the prudence and forethought of Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton, the poor people with whom they were labouring would have been destroyed ; and yet, on their return from their successful expedition, they had the mortification to hear that the Bechuanas had actually dug up and stolen many of the articles they had buried, in the prospect of being driven away by the Mantatees, and that the houses had been broken into and ransacked, notwithstanding

Mothibi's endeavours to prevent what now appeared to him and his chiefs great ingratitude.

Shortly afterwards, when all apprehensions of war were over, Mr. Moffat visited Cape Town, taking with him some of the Bechuana chiefs, who manifested unbounded surprise at every thing they saw among civilized people.

It was with some difficulty that they were prevailed upon to go on board one of the ships in the bay ; nor would they enter the boat till he had preceded them. They were perfectly astounded, when hoisted on deck, with the enormous size of the hull, and the height of the masts ; and when they saw a boy mount the rigging, and ascend to the very mast-head, they were speechless with amazement. Taisho whispered to the young prince, " A ga si khatla ?" Is it not an ape ? When they entered the splendid cabin, and looked into the deep hold, they could scarcely be convinced that the vessel was not resting on the bottom of the ocean. " Do these water-houses (ships) unyoke, like wagon-oxen, every night ?" they inquired. " Do they graze in the sea to keep them alive ?" A ship in full sail approaching

the roads, they were asked what they thought of that. "We have no thoughts here; we hope to think again when we get to the shore," was their reply.

The visit being completed, and the health of Mrs. Moffat, for which the journey was undertaken, being improved, they returned to the station in 1824, with Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, who had come out from England to join the African mission. During Mr. Moffat's absence on this visit, Mr. Hamilton had laboured with no great success, except in making more favourable impressions on the natives, so that they seemed to be kinder than before.

It was then thought best that Mr. Moffat should visit Makaba, the king of the Bauangketsi, which journey he undertook, accompanied by some Griquas, who were going part of the way to hunt elephants.

Losing their way, and travelling back instead of onwards, quite an amusing scene occurred.

While preparing a cup of coffee, (says Mr. Moffat,) I took out my compass, to assure the party that for more than two hours we had been travelling towards the Mashaua, from whence we had come. The more sagacious

looked for some time at the little instrument, and then, looking around and upwards to the stars, pronounced it to be an impostor. Others remarked, that it might know the right way in its own country, but how was it to find it out there ?

While eating a morsel of food, for which we had an uncommon relish, the waning moon began to diffuse a pale lustre on the eastern horizon. "What a fire !" said one. "It is the moon," I replied. All, starting to their feet, exclaimed, "The moon cannot rise on that side of the world ;" and Antonie, a venerable old man, who had been once a slave, said, very respectfully, "Sir, your head has turned ; the moon never rose in the west in my life, and I am an old man." "It is the moon," I again said ; but no one believed me, and we resumed our repast. Presently the moon's horn was seen above the horizon, when all rose again, some saying, "What is that ?" I had no further need to argue the point. Antonie, in grave amazement, exclaimed, "The moon has for once risen on the wrong side of the world !" Soon after the sun's rays threw additional light on their bewildered imaginations, and showed to all that,

for half the night, we had been travelling towards the station of the former day, instead of from it.

During this journey, Mr. Moffat says, "We halted at two natural wells of rather an extraordinary description, about one hundred yards from each other. One is about sixteen feet deep, with four feet of water: they are both nearly perpendicular, and about two feet and a half in diameter. The hill in which they are, is composed of a conglomerate mass of iron schist, and near the mouth, as well as in the sides of these holes, are appearances as if the whole had once been in a state of fusion, and that these were the apertures of some internal fires, but nothing like lava appears in the neighbourhood. From the older natives who have resided near these wells all their lives, I learned that they were once much deeper. The water was excellent, and to obtain sufficient for ourselves and horses, we fastened a vessel to the end of a rope; the oxen we sent to a water at a distance, called Khuari.

"Here we spent a quiet, and I believed a profitable Sabbath. There were members of the church at Griqua Town in our party, who

often proved interesting society in a desert. I conversed some time with the poor, ignorant Sauneys; they appeared lively and interesting, especially when they had eaten plenty of meat, of which there was, on that occasion, no lack. I made many inquiries to discover if they had any sense of moral evil; it was with great difficulty I could convey to their understanding what I meant to say. They assured me again and again, that they could not comprehend that there was evil in any thing they could do. The term *boleo* (sin) did not convey to them the same meaning it does to us; they applied it to a weapon, or any thing else which they thought was not made as they wished. Thus, what we should call an imperfect knife or arrow, they would call a sinful arrow. But of a sense of sin arising from responsibility, they had no conception; they did not even seem to think that the conduct of those who tyrannized over them was wicked, but that it had fallen to their lot to be so treated, or was a thing that happened, like a lion killing a man. When I directed their thoughts to a great Being in the heavens, some looked up with a vacant stare, as if they expected to see something appear. When I asked, Who

made all things? they were only surprised that I should ask such a question. They wondered at our singing hymns, which "these valleys and rocks never heard," and inquired if they were war songs. My books puzzled them; they asked if they were my 'Bola,' prognosticating dice. Hapless beings, they drag out a miserable existence! The principal part of the game they obtain is caught in pit-falls. I have seen some of these holes sixteen feet deep, where even the tall giraffe and ponderous rhinoceros are entrapped.

At last the party reached the Barolongs, where they were saluted by Tauane the principal chief. "Anxious to make the best use of my time," says the Missionary, "especially of the Sabbath, I first held divine service in the Dutch language, for the Griquas; but the noise of the multitude which had congregated, obliged us to desist. I then attempted at two different parts of the town to address the people through an interpreter, and by the influence of the chiefs obtained a hearing. I conversed with the principal men on the subject of a missionary settling among them. One said, "You must come and make rain;" and another, "You must come and protect

us." Of course I gave them to understand that the object of the missionary was neither to make rain, nor to protect them, and referred to our mission at the Kuruman, of which some had a perfect knowledge. Multitudes, who appeared to have nothing to do, crowded around us from morning till night.

Wooden bowls, spoons, and ornaments in abundance, were brought to exchange for commodities which we possessed ; among others, two elderly men came and presented their children for sale ; a sheep was expected for one, and a quantity of beads for the other. I embraced the opportunity of pointing out to them, and to all present, how unnatural such conduct was, and the direful consequences which must arise from such a course ; that a sheep would soon be eaten, and a few ornaments could avail little when compared with the assistance they might expect from their children ; how useful they might become to the tribe generally, and to themselves in particular, when age and weakness would make them thankful to have a friend, a relative, and particularly a child. They walked off, evidently disappointed, while those around, who were listening to what I said, professed their

fullest conviction of the horrors to which such a system, if connived at, would lead. It is proper, at the same time, to remark, that slavery, in the general sense of the term, does not exist among the Bechuanas. The feudal system prevails among the tribes. There are two grades, the rich, who are hereditary chiefs, and the poor. The latter continue in the same condition, and their lot is a comparatively easy kind of vassalage. Their lives are something like those of their dogs, lives of hunger and idleness, but they are the property of their respective chiefs, and their forefathers have, from time immemorial, been at the mercy of their lords.

Proceeding on the journey, they were at length met by messengers from Makaba, who had heard of their approach and sent to welcome them. They reached his town, and he received them with every expression of joy. He insisted on their having the wagons drawn through his town, to the great injury of his fences which were broken down as they passed.

On the day after their arrival they were formally received by the king. The reception is thus described.

“About ten o’clock, A. M., Makaba made his appearance with his retinue, and sat down opposite to my wagon. The bustling crowd retired to a distance, and a dead silence ensued. He addressed us nearly as follows:—‘My friends, I am perfectly happy; my heart is whiter than milk, because you have visited me. To-day I am a great man. Men will now say, “Makaba is in league with white people.” I know that all men speak evil of me. They seek my hurt. It is because they cannot conquer me that I am hated. If they do me evil, I can reward them twofold. They are like children that quarrel; what the weaker cannot do by strength, he supplies with evil names. You are come to see the villain Makaba; you are come, as the Batlapis say, “to die by my hands.” You are wise and bold to come and see with your eyes, and laugh at the testimony of my enemies.’ A long conversation afterwards ensued respecting the state of the country, and the Mantatee invasion. On this topic he was eloquent while describing the manner in which he entrapped many hundreds of the enemy by ambuscades; and stretching forth his muscular arm in the direction of the field of con-

flict, he said, 'There lie the bleached bones of the enemy, who came upon our hills like the locusts, but who melted before us by the shaking of the spear;' adding, with a stentorian voice, and with superlative self-complacency, 'Who is to be compared to Makaba, the son of Meleta, the man of conquest?' The listening multitude broke the silence in deafening applause. I then told him that the object of my present journey was to open a communication, that we might consider him in future as one of our chief friends, and, as a pledge of that friendship, a missionary should come and reside with him; to which he replied, that 'in future he hoped no grass would be allowed to grow on the road between the Kuruman and Kuakue. Mothibi, I know, will hinder you, because he is afraid of losing you; he is afraid that you will build your houses with me.'

"I embraced another opportunity of conversing with Makaba on the subject of a missionary residence with him, with which idea he professed to be highly pleased. I also hinted that it was probable that a missionary would go to the Bahurutsi, on which he remarked, 'that men of peace should live in every na-

tion, that a friendly intercourse might be kept up.'

"I had embraced different opportunities of conversing with the chief and his people on divine things, but with little success; at least, it appeared as if he did not hear a word I said. Sometimes, when I have been trying to arrest his attention by repeating something striking in the works of God, or in the life of the Saviour, he would interrupt me by asking a question as distant as the antipodes from the subject to which I hoped he was listening. I felt particularly anxious on the Sabbath to obtain a hearing, and resolved to pay him a formal visit for that purpose. I had felt miserable at the prospect of leaving him without the satisfaction of having told him what was the only object of the missionary, especially as he had professed his wish to have one. On the Sabbath morning early, we had our prayer meeting, but such was the crowd and noise, that to hold the service was out of the question. The more we entreated them to be quiet, the greater uproar they made, so that we were compelled to desist. In the forenoon, taking some of my company with me, I went into the town, and found Makaba seated amidst a large

number of his principal men, all engaged either in preparing skins, cutting them, sewing mantles, or telling news.

“Sitting down beside this great man, illustrious for war and conquest, and amidst nobles and counsellors, including rain-makers and others of the same order, I stated to him that my object was to tell him my news. His countenance lighted up, hoping to hear of feats of war, destruction of tribes, and such like subjects, so congenial to his savage disposition. When he found that my topics had solely a reference to the Great Being of whom, the day before, he had told me he knew nothing, and of the Saviour’s mission to this world, whose name he had never heard, he resumed his knife and jackal’s skin, and hummed a native air. One of his men, sitting near me, appeared to be struck with the character of the Redeemer, which I was endeavouring to describe, and particularly with his miracles. On hearing that he raised the dead, he very naturally exclaimed, ‘What an excellent doctor he must have been, to make dead men live!’ This led me to describe his power, and how that power would be exercised at the last day in raising the dead. In

the course of my remarks, the ear of the monarch caught the startling sound of a resurrection. 'What!' he exclaimed, with astonishment, 'what are these words about? the dead, the dead arise!' 'Yes,' was my reply, 'all the dead shall arise.' 'Will my father arise?' 'Yes,' I answered, 'your father will arise.' 'Will all the slain in battle arise?' 'Yes.' 'And will all that have been killed and devoured by lions, tigers, hyenas, and crocodiles, again revive?' 'Yes; and come to judgment.' 'And will those whose bodies have been left to waste and to wither on the desert plains, and scattered to the winds, again arise?' he asked, with a kind of triumph, as if he had now fixed me. 'Yes,' I replied; 'not one will be left behind.' This I repeated with increased emphasis. After looking at me for a few moments, he turned to his people, to whom he spoke with a stentorian voice:— 'Hark, ye wise men, whoever is among you, the wisest of past generations, did ever your ears hear such strange and unheard of news?' And addressing himself to one whose countenance and attire showed that he had seen many years, and was a personage of no common order, 'Have you ever heard such strange

news as this?' 'No,' was the sage's answer; 'I had supposed that I possessed all the knowledge of the country, for I have heard the tales of many generations. I am in the place of the ancients, but my knowledge is confounded with the words of his mouth. Surely, he must have lived long before the period when we were born.' Makaba, then turning and addressing himself to me, and laying his hand on my breast, said, 'Father, I love you much. Your visit and your presence have made my heart white as milk. The words of your mouth are sweet as honey, but the words of a resurrection are too great to be heard. I do not wish to hear again about the dead rising! The dead cannot rise! The dead must not arise!' 'Why,' I inquired, 'can so great a man refuse knowledge, and turn away from wisdom? Tell me, my friend, why I must not "add to words," and speak of a resurrection?' Raising and uncovering his arm, which had been strong in battle, and shaking his hand as if quivering a spear, he replied, 'I have slain my thousands, (bontsintsi,) and shall they arise?' Never before had the light of divine revelation dawned upon his savage mind, and of course his conscience had

never accused him, no, not for one of the thousands of deeds of rapine and murder which had marked his course through a long career.

“While the chieftain and myself were engaged in the above conversation, the most profound silence reigned, and continued till interrupted by one whose features appeared to indicate that he was a man of war. ‘I have killed many, but I never saw the immortal part which you describe.’ ‘Because invisible,’ I replied; and referred him to many invisible things, the existence of which he never doubted. Makaba again muttered, ‘What do my ears hear to-day! I am old, but never thought of these things before;’ and hinted that he had heard enough. One of the Griquas who was with me, observing the strong excitement which had been produced, partook of the spirit, and addressing me in the Dutch language, said:—‘Oh I was thinking if you would only exercise a little more faith, and cure that lame man, the whole of the thousands of the Bauangketsi would be believers.’

“They were greatly interested when I explained to them the use of writing, and books, but appeared to be a little superstitious about

touching them. It afforded me no little gratification that these subjects of conversational instruction had excited considerable interest, for many afterwards came to our wagons to make further inquiries."

The time having come for the departure of Mr. Moffat, he took leave of this savage king, and set out on his return to the station. On the way back they met with numerous striking adventures, which the limits to which we are confined do not permit us to describe.



CHAPTER XI.

Civil war—Missionaries suspected—Trials increasing—Death of a prince—Cruel superstition—Plague of locusts.

MR. MOFFAT now resumed his labours among the Bechuanas, but in the midst of great discouragements. The people came but irregularly to divine worship, and the fear of war diverted their thoughts from the concerns of their souls.

Soon a civil war broke out, which compelled the missionaries to abandon the station and retire to Griqua Town, where they were still exposed to danger. Two of the neighbouring tribes being engaged in war, a public meeting was called to bring about a settlement. Mr. Moffat made a speech, and tried in vain to make peace.

The missionaries were suspected by the Bechuanas of being more friendly to the Griquas than to them, and this circumstance ex-

posed them to great danger. One evening, when an attack from the Griquas was expected, the missionaries endeavoured to conciliate the feelings of the Bechuanas; but they scoffed and raged, and told them to go and convert the enemy. At length the situation of things became even more fearful. Mr. Moffat gives the following description of the scenes through which they passed:—

“Our situation became ten times more precarious than ever, having now discovered that their numbers were formidable, and that they had butchered hundreds in cold blood, and committed acts of horrid barbarity in cutting off the hands of the women in order the more easily to remove from their arms the rings which they wore. Some prisoners who had escaped, gave us, moreover, every reason to expect that they would attack our station, with the hope of obtaining ammunition. Though this was a hackneyed threat, the appearance of our men, and their ignorance of our motives for allowing them to go, did not leave the shadow of a doubt on our minds that our situation was a dangerous one, particularly as all the natives were fleeing, and we could expect little quarter from the mass

of Griquas, Bastards from the colony, Namaquas, Corannas, Bushmen, and Batlaros, which composed the banditti. After much deliberation and prayer for Divine guidance, we felt, however reluctant, we ought to pack up during the night the most useful of our goods, that Mr. Hughes and myself, with our families, should leave on the coming morning, while Mr. Hamilton, who was without family, and one man, should remain, with a couple of horses, in case of danger, till wagons should be sent to his assistance from Daniel's Kuil.

“To us the Sabbath was not a day of rest ; but though we hung our harps upon the willows, we were enabled to wrestle with God in prayer for the poor Bechuanas, who appeared to be given over to infatuation ; and thousands of whom were scattered on the lonely desert, pinched with hunger, and threatened with misery, famine, and death. Many females, lame with walking, and feeble in body, had sought refuge in our houses, while others had sunk under accumulated toil. It was deeply affecting to look on such objects of pity, while we could render them little assistance.”

After a journey of five cheerless days they

reached Griqua Town, and were kindly received by the missionary there. The Bechuanas soon sent them word that they were anxious for their return, but the unsettled state of things rendered that inexpedient. The interior tribes were, according to the most authentic information, deluging the country with blood, appearing to depend for their support on the destruction of others. The powerful and hitherto invincible Bauangketsi were dispersed by a combined force, and Makaba had been slain in the midst of heaps of warriors. In the south-east the Batau and Legoyas were carrying on the same destructive game. The Wesleyan mission at Makuase was also broken up, and the missionaries retired to the colony.

Mr. Moffat afterwards returned and sought to do good among the Bechuanas. In the year 1825, the young prince named Peclu died of a strange and malignant disease. This event brings to light a cruel superstition that prevailed in that country. He says:—

“In this disorder, as in every other, when a person of influence is taken ill or dies, the cause is eagerly sought after, not in the nature of the disease, but in some person who was

at enmity with the deceased, or who had acted in some way to excite suspicion. This was very natural in them, as they did not believe in an overruling Providence. It was the universal belief, as well as their wish, that men should live alway, and that death was entirely the result of witchcraft, or medicine imparted by some malignant hand, or of some casualty or want of food. The death of the poor excited but little sorrow, and less surmise; on the other hand, I have known instances when the domestics of a principal man have been murdered in cold blood, just because it was suspected that they had something to do with their master's sickness. Approaching the abode of a sick chief, I was informed by one of his attendants, with an air of satisfaction, that he would now recover, as two of his servants who had been seen scattering medicine somewhere in the neighbourhood of his dwelling, had just been speared; and while he yet spoke the stifled sighs and moans of their widows and children were entering my ears. This chief is now a Christian.

“When Peclu died, suspicion fell on the parents of his bride, from some little misunderstanding which had existed at his marriage.

They would all have been butchered had not the more enlightened views of Mahura, the king's brother, who had received orders to carry the bloody purpose into effect, induced him to apprise the chief and his family of their danger, that they might flee to the Barolongs, which they did. Mahura and his warriors pursued, but determined not to overtake them. As the law of retaliation was a principle recognised by the Bechuana rulers, events like those recorded were of almost daily recurrence during the first years of the mission, but which now rarely happen, even for hundreds of miles beyond the missionary stations. Thus the gospel, which has brought the startling sound of immortality to the savage ear, exerts, as a secondary benefit, a salutary influence even among those who do not receive it, and who remain comparatively ignorant of its chief requirements."

The narrative of the trials of the missionaries continues:—

“ While witnessing these trying and mysterious providences, we were often deeply affected, to see that all our efforts to induce them to improve these dispensations were of no avail. ‘Go and teach the marauders not

to destroy us,' was constantly thrown in our teeth. We much needed divine grace to enable us to persevere; but it often afforded us strong consolation to know that we were remembered in our native land, the multitude of voices ever ascending to the throne of God. We continued our public services, and when the people would not come to us we went to them.

“About this time another powerful body from the Orange river, with horses and guns, made an attack on the tribes to the westward of our station, and perpetrated great cruelties. The people again fled in consternation, and, at Mothibi's request, a messenger was despatched to Griqua Town, entreating assistance; but it was not in the power of Waterboer to afford it, however willing he might have been to do so. As we had suffered greatly both in our health and property, by the last flight, and as we had no confidence in the old tale which the natives invented, that the enemy would attack us, we resolved to remain at our post.”

But the trials of Mr. Moffat were not these alone. He was called to bury his son when a few days old, and his wife's health was

feeble. Mr. Hughes, another missionary, was compelled by ill health to abandon the station. Armed robbers were continually making inroads, threatening death and extirpation. The missionaries were obliged to work daily at every species of labour, most of which was very heavy, under a burning sun, and in a dry climate, where only one shower had fallen during the preceding twelve months; at the same time, the language, which was entirely oral, had to be acquired. A spelling-book, catechism, and small portions of Scripture, were prepared, and even sent to the Cape to be printed in 1825; but, as if the measure of disappointment was not full, they were by some mistake sent to England, and before they could possibly return to the station, they might have had several improved editions.

Again were they threatened with war; and when the missionaries declined to take sides against the enemy, the people were displeased: especially the brother of the king. He became so much enraged, that he would show the missionaries that his name, instead of being Molala, (poor,) should henceforth be *lion*.

To display his terrible fierceness, he went off with a party to hunt wild beasts. One

afternoon, seeing a giraffe in the distance, he seized his spear, mounted his horse, and ordered his attendant to follow with his gun on another. The master being on the swiftest animal, and evening coming on, he disappeared on the undulating plain, and the servant returned to the rendezvous. Next day, the latter, with some companions, pursued the trail, found where his master had come up with the giraffe, and appeared to have made attempts to stab it, and then, from the course he took, it was evident he had wandered. They slept, and with the returning day continued to pursue his footmarks, which in the evening brought them to a spot where a number of lions had been. Beside a bush, where they supposed the chieftain had laid himself down the second night, they found the horse, killed by the lions, but scarcely touched; while the man was eaten up, and nothing left but the cranium. What was rather remarkable, the master, seeing he was leaving his servant in the rear, turned about and gave him his tinder-box for fear of losing it himself. Had he retained this, he might have made a fire, which would have protected him from the lions, and led to his earlier dis-

covery. This event was too striking to be overlooked by the people, who had frequently heard of a Divine Providence, but they were silent, and endeavoured to relieve their minds, by driving from their memories the visage and vain boastings of him who had been devoured by the very beast of prey whose name and powers were to be his motto, and the characteristics of his future actions.

And now the reports of war coming in were so numerous and fearful, that the native assistants of the missionaries abandoned them. "Thus," says Mr. Moffat, "we were left, but were still wonderfully supported, realizing the fulfilment of the gracious promise, that as our day is, so shall our strength be."

To all the other trials of the missionary life in South Africa, was now added a new *plague*. After a long drought, when plentiful showers of rain at last were given, the hopes of abundance were cut off by swarms of locusts. Mr. Moffat says :

"They had not been seen for more than twenty years before, but have never entirely left the country since. They might be seen passing over like an immense cloud, extending from the earth to a considerable height,

producing, with their wings, a great noise. They always proceed nearly in the direction of the wind, those in advance descending to eat any thing they light upon, and rising in the rear, as the cloud advances. 'They have no king, but they go forth, all of them, by bands,' and are gathered together in one place in the evening, where they rest; and from their immense numbers, they weigh down the shrubs, and lie at times one on the other to the depth of several inches. In the morning, when the sun begins to diffuse warmth, they take wing, leaving a large extent without one vestige of verdure; even the plants and shrubs are barked. Wherever they halt for the night, or alight during the day, they become a prey to other animals, and are eaten not only by beasts of prey, but by all kinds of game, serpents, lizards, and frogs. When passing through the air, kites, vultures, crows, and particularly the locust bird, as it is called, may be seen devouring them. When a swarm alights on gardens, or even fields, the crop for one season is destroyed. I have observed a field of young maize devoured in the space of two hours. They eat not only every thing vegetable, but also flannel and linen

The natives embrace every opportunity of gathering them, which can be done during the night. Whenever the cloud alights at a place not very distant from a town, the inhabitants turn out with sacks, and often with pack-oxen, gather loads, and return the next day with millions.

“It has happened, that in gathering them, individuals have been bitten by serpents ; and on one occasion a woman had been travelling several miles with a large bundle of locusts on her head, when a serpent, which had been put into the sack with them, found its way out. The woman, supposing it to be a thong dangling about her shoulders, laid hold of it with her hand, and feeling that it was alive, instantly precipitated both to the ground, and fled.

“The locusts are prepared for eating by simple boiling, or rather steaming, as they are put into a large pot with a little water, and covered closely up ; after boiling for a short time, they are taken out and spread on mats in the sun to dry, when they are winnowed, something like corn, to clear them of their legs and wings ; and when perfectly dry, are put into sacks, or laid upon the house floor in a heap. The natives eat them whole, adding a

little salt when they can obtain it; or they pound them in a wooden mortar, and when they have reduced them to something like meal, they mix them with a little water, and make a kind of cold stir-about.

When locusts abound, the natives become quite fat, and would even reward any old lady who said that she had coaxed them to alight within reach of the inhabitants. They are, on the whole, not bad food; and when hunger has made them palatable, are eaten as matter of course. When well fed, they are almost as good as shrimps. There is a species not eatable, with reddish wings, rather larger than those described, and which, though less numerous, are more destructive. The exploits of these armies, fearful as they are, bear no comparison to the devastation they make before they are able to fly, in which state they are called 'boyane.' They receive a new name in every stage of their growth, till they reach maturity, when they are called 'letsié.' They never emerge from the sand, where they were deposited as eggs, till rain has fallen to raise grass for the young progeny. In their course, from which nothing can divert them, they appear like a dark red stream, extending

often more than a mile broad ; and from their incessant hopping, the dust appears as if alive. Nothing but a broad and rapid torrent could arrest their progress, and that only by drowning them ; and if one reached the opposite shore, it would keep the original direction. A small rivulet avails nothing, as they swim dexterously. A line of fire is no barrier, as they leap into it till it is extinguished, and the others walk over the dead. Walls and houses form no impediment ; they climb the very chimneys, either obliquely or straight over such obstacles, just as their instinct leads them. All other earthly powers, from the fiercest lion to a marshalled army, are nothing compared with these diminutive insects. The course they have followed is stripped of every leaf or blade of verdure. It is enough to make the inhabitants of a village turn pale to hear that they are coming in a straight line to their gardens. When a country is not extensive, and is bounded by the sea, the scourge is soon over, the winds carrying them away like clouds to the watery waste, where they alight to rise no more. Thus the immense flights which pass to the south and east rarely return, but fresh supplies are always pouring down

from the north. All human endeavours to diminish their numbers would appear like attempting to drain the ocean by a pump.

We could not, however, feel otherwise than thankful for this visitation, on account of the poor; for as many thousands of cattle had been taken from the natives, and gardens to an immense extent destroyed, many hundreds of families, but for the locusts, must have perished with hunger. It was not surprising that our scanty supplies, which we were compelled to procure from a distance, were seized by the hungry people. If our oxen or calves were allowed to wander out of sight, they were instantly stolen. One day two noted fellows from the mountains came down on a man who had the charge of our cattle, murdered him, and ran off with an ox. Some time before, the whole of our calves disappeared; two of our men went in pursuit, and found, in the ruins of an old town, the remains of the calves laid aside for future use. On tracing the footmarks to a secluded spot near the river, they found the thieves, two desperate-looking characters, who, seizing their bows and poisoned arrows, dared their approach. It would have been easy for our men to have shot them on

the spot, but their only object was to bring them, if possible, to the station. After a dangerous scuffle, one fled, and the other precipitated himself into a pool of water, amidst reeds, where he stood menacing the men with his drawn bow, till they at last succeeded in seizing him. He was brought to the station, with some of the meat, which, though not killed in the most delicate manner, was acceptable, and was the first veal we ever ate there; for calves are too valuable in that country to be slaughtered, not only because they perpetuate the supply of milk from the cow, but are reared to use in travelling and agriculture.

The prisoner had a most forbidding appearance, and we could not help regarding him as a being brutalized by hunger; and, in addition to a defect in vision, he looked like one capable of perpetrating any action without remorse. His replies to our queries and expostulations were something like the growlings of a disappointed hungry beast of prey. There were no authorities in the country to whom we could appeal, and the conclusion to which the people came was, to inflict a little castigation, while one of the natives was to whisper in his ear that he must flee for his life. Seeing a

young man drawing near with a gun, he took to his heels, and the man firing a charge of loose powder after him, increased his terror, and made him bound into the marsh, and flee to the opposite side, thinking himself well off to have escaped with his life, which he could not have expected from his own countrymen. He lived for a time at a neighbouring village, where he was wont to describe in graphic style his narrow escape, and how he had outrun the musket-ball! When told by some one that the gun was only to frighten him, he saw that it must have been so; he reasoned on our character, made inquiries, and, from our men sparing him in the first instance, and ourselves giving him food, and allowing him to run off after he had received a few strokes with a thong, he concluded that there must be something very merciful about our character; and at last he made his appearance again on our station. He was soon after employed as a labourer, embraced the gospel, and has, through Divine grace, continued to make a consistent profession, and is become an example of intelligence, industry and love.

CHAPTER XII.

Journey to the Barolong's—Lions—Mr. Moffat's situation—Cruel practices.

IN the year 1826, Mr. Moffat went to the Barolong's, to devote himself to the study of the language, leaving Mr. Hamilton at the station. In this journey he had fearful encounters with lions, which seem almost incredible to us who have no experience of such adventures. One night, while on the way with two natives, after they had pitched their oxen, and Mr. Moffat had lain down in the wagon to sleep, they were roused by six lions, one of whom seized a cow belonging to the natives, dragged her a few rods off, and devoured her so near them that they could hear him breaking the bones.

He came to a village where the people had never heard of a missionary, and to whom it was impossible to convey any idea of God, or of the sinfulness of man.

Having reached the village of Bogachu,

a Barolong chief, Mr. Moffat took up his abode with him and devoted ten weeks to the study of the language. Here he had to lead a semi-savage life among heathenish dance and song, and immeasurable heaps of dirt and filth.

And how painful it must have been to be in the midst of such people, with no other society, and with no human sympathy. "The people," he says, "were kind, and my blundering in the language gave rise to many bursts of laughter. Never, in one instance, would an individual correct a word or sentence, till he or she had mimicked the original so effectually, as to give great merriment to others. They appeared delighted with my company, especially as I could, when meat was scarce, take my gun and shoot a rhinoceros, or some other animal, when a night of feasting and talking would follow. They thought themselves quite lucky in having such company, as one who could supply them occasionally with both food and medicine.

"As the people had no gardens, the women had very little to do, and they considered it quite a luxury to spend a couple of hours in noisy and often deafening conversation at my wagon. Every opportunity was gladly em-

braced in which I could impart instruction to the people of the different villages around, which were inhabited by Barolongs, Bamairis, and some Bahurutsi refugees from Kurrechane. My preaching and speaking did indeed appear to be casting seed by the wayside or on the flinty rock, while they would gravely ask, if I were in earnest, and really believed that there was such a Being as I described! It was indeed painful to hear them turning the theme of man's redemption and the cross into ridicule, and making a sport of immortality.

“The people, to please me, would assemble on the Sabbath, as I told them I could not be happy without telling them about their souls and another world. One day, while describing the day of judgment, several of my hearers expressed great concern at the idea of all their cattle being destroyed, together with their ornaments. They never for one moment allow their thoughts to dwell on death, which is, according to their views, nothing less than annihilation. Their supreme happiness consists in having abundance of meat. Asking a man who was more grave and thoughtful than his companions, what was the finest sight he could desire, he instantly re-

plied, 'A great fire covered with pots full of meat;' adding, 'how ugly the fire looks without a pot!'

"My situation was not very well suited for study, among a noisy rabble and a constant influx of beggars. Writing was a work of great difficulty, owing to the flies crowding into the inkhorn or clustering round the point of the pen, and pursuing it on the paper, drinking the ink as fast as it flowed. The night brought little relief, for as soon as the candle was lighted, innumerable insects swarmed around so as to put it out.

"During my sojourn among this portion of that people, I had no little difficulty in obtaining a hearing when I wished to talk to them about their eternal interests. Molala was a complete heathen, and had obtained his riches, as well as his influence, by intrigue and rapine. I was in the habit of concluding from facts, about which I have not deemed it necessary to be very minute, that the Batlapis were, as a people, not only very ignorant and depraved, but exceedingly brutal: however, a short stay among the Barolongs convinced me that the latter far exceeded the former. An intelligent traveller, who sojourned for

a time among the Batlapis, was not mistaken when he was obliged, most reluctantly, to come to the conclusion, that ‘the foulest blot on their character is the indifference with which *murder* is viewed among them. It excites little sensation, excepting in the family of the person who has been murdered; and brings, it is said, no disgrace upon him who has committed it; nor uneasiness, excepting the fear of their revenge. Shall we not hesitate to assert that human nature is superior to the brute creation, when we find among this people instances of the fact, that the shedding of human blood, without the pretext of provocation or offence, and even by the basest treachery, has fixed no infamy upon the perpetrator of so awful a crime, and rarely drawn upon him any punishment from the chief authority; an authority which the Giver of power intrusts to mortal hands, only for the weak, and for the common good? Such, at least, are the sentiments which they express, and such were the replies to my questions on this subject.’

“During my stay at Kongke, an instance occurred confirming this view. A man was quarrelling with his wife about a very trifling

affair, when, in a fit of rage, he grasped his spear, and laid her at his feet—a bleeding corpse! Here there were no coroners nor jury to take cognisance of the fact, and he walked about without a blush, while the lifeless body was dragged out to be devoured by the hyenas. When I endeavoured to represent to the chiefs, with whom I was familiar, as old acquaintances, the magnitude of such crimes, they laughed, I might say inordinately, at the horror I felt for the murder of a woman by her own husband.”

A custom prevailed among this people of removing to a distance from the towns and villages persons who have been wounded. A man would go out and make a fire in the evening by the side of the wounded one, but this would sometimes go out, and then the lions would come and devour him.

Mr. Moffat had a very interesting interview with a *native blacksmith*, who had really acquired some skill in working metals; and when he had secured his confidence, Mr. Moffat tried to talk with him about his soul. He says, “When I talked with him about the power of knowledge; explaining the bellows and other mechanical improvements, which

insure accuracy as well as save time and labour, to this he listened with great attention; but when I introduced divine subjects, man's misery, and man's redemption, he looked at me with mouth dilated, and asked, 'A ga u morihi?' Art thou a rain-maker? This man had also an interesting son and daughter, to whom I often spoke, as well as to some others, in social converse, which I hoped and prayed might be blessed; but what became of these families, I never knew.

"After ten weeks' sojourn among this people, who showed me no little kindness, I prepared to return home; and on the Sabbath collected all, and gave them my concluding address, on the importance of believing the gospel of mercy. After a thirsty journey, I reached home, with a heart filled with gratitude to God for the comforts I enjoyed, and the progress I had made in the language, during these months of a semi-savage life."

CHAPTER XIII.

Brightening prospects—Disappointments—Attacks from the natives—Suspension of the mission—Judgments of God upon the natives.

SEVERAL thousands of the natives had now taken up their abode in the neighbourhood of the missionaries. They were more disposed to be at peace. They would come together more cheerfully to hear the word, and the school was better attended than it had formerly been. The missionaries began to feel that they could labour in hope, and they believed that the day of the Lord was at hand.

Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, whose ill health had compelled them to leave the station, now returned from the colony with renewed strength. But all those fond hopes were destined to a sudden disappointment.

The news arrived at the station that the Bergenaars were coming down upon them

to take their property and break up the mission. The Bechuanas urged the missionaries to flee before the enemy should arrive. They were finally compelled to yield to the desires of their friends, and once more pack up their things as well as they could, and retire from the field they were cultivating with such fair prospects of success. After a melancholy journey of five days, they reached Griqua Town. But they were sorry they went. There seemed nothing before them but starvation. False reports of danger every day gave them fresh occasion for alarm, and they were convinced that it would have been quite as well for them to have remained at the station, trusting in God for protection.

Mr. Hamilton, the only missionary without a family, returned to the station first, and was afterwards followed by Mr. Hughes and Mr. Moffat.

Mr. Wright, who was labouring among the Griquas, desired to unite that mission with the Bechuanas; but it was finally decided that Mr. Hughes should remove to Mr. Wright's station and share his labours.

On Mr. Moffat's return to the Kuruman, the Bechuana mission station, he found things

in a sad plight. "Half of our oxen," he says, "and nearly all our cows were dead ; we were too poor to purchase more ; not a quart of milk on the station, and what was worse, nearly all our people gone ; heaps of ashes, where crowds once lived, who but for these reports would have been there still ; we felt as if we could never forgive ourselves for having fled, and resolved afresh to resume our labours among the few poor who had remained on the station, and who were on the increase."

The superintendent of the missions, Mr. Miles, arrived at this time, and his visit was of great service to the mission. He suggested the importance of some hymns in the native language ; Mr. Moffat made the attempt to prepare them, and the first hymn ever written in the language is one of the many now in extensive use. The arrival of the spelling-books, &c., at the same time, enabled them to commence a school in the Bechuana. This was the dawning of a new era on the mission. For ten years they had toiled with no fruit to cheer them in their labours. But brighter days were at hand.

The fragments of various tribes, that had

been scattered by wars among themselves now gathered around the mission, and the field of usefulness was thus extended. It is encouraging to read such a record as this in the journal of Mr. Moffat :—

“The day-school began to cheer our drooping spirits, to which we added one in the evening, having about forty scholars in each, and some we heard began to pray! The attendance on public worship was good, and the introduction of singing hymns in the language, only three in number, produced a very pleasing effect on the savage mind, and no less so on our own, though we could not discover any inwrought feeling produced by the preaching of the gospel.

“One mission-house had been finished, another was raised as high as the beams, and though we had faith to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods, and to expend our lives, yet as the friends at home were beginning to despair of success, we did not like to expend any more money. I remember when it was signified to us, though not officially, that the abandonment of the mission was in contemplation, we felt our souls at once riveted to the country and people, and even had our re-

sources been withdrawn, we were confident of Divine interference in our behalf."

Mr. Hamilton, who had long and faithfully toiled in this field, now found it necessary to visit the colony.

Shortly after his departure, a party of hostile Corannas visited the station, and pretending to be peacefully disposed, watched for a favourable moment of attack, and in the affray that followed, Mr. Moffat came very near losing his life. The savages were repulsed, and fled to the mountains. These men had been engaged in plundering other villages, and murdering in cold blood all who fell into their hands. Mr. Moffat asked some of them who were taken prisoners, if their minds did not revolt at such crimes, as deliberately killing innocent females and children, who possessed nothing to tempt their cupidity, but who had cheerfully served them with wood and water. After sitting some minutes motionless in deep reflection, one of them said, "Mynheer, the heart of man is a wonderful thing; there is nothing which it cannot do. Custom makes even murder a plaything."

This was indeed having a seared conscience, or being past feeling, and he, like many

others, was unmoved by any conviction of the enormity of such crimes. These men were afterwards sent home to their friends, evidently struck by the kindness which had been shown them, and which it was hoped might have a beneficial influence upon their minds. Some time after, the missionaries were informed by an individual from their neighbourhood, that their chief had sharply reproved them for so daring an attempt on a missionary station, adding, "that the results were such as they might have expected."

Two months after this attack, the missionaries were again warned that a chief from the Orange river was coming to make war upon them and their station. Nor were they aware of his near approach until the enemy was within eight miles. "We had," says Mr. Moffat, "very few men able to use a gun, and only two of these on whom we could depend. We were weak indeed, and to save our cattle, we sent them off with some men to the wide wilderness, in the Bushman country. We were consoled to know that an omnipotent Jehovah saw our condition, that He could defend by many or by few, and could so order and overrule affairs as even to prevent blood-

shed. For this my dear partner and I united again and again in fervent supplication to Him who had said, 'Call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will deliver.' Our souls sickened at the idea of seeing the ground of the mission station dyed with human blood, and we felt a strong persuasion that it would be prevented. Another night, in which infants only could forget their cares and fears, passed by. Early next morning the band emerged from behind a rising ground, where they had passed the night, within half a mile of the place. The enemy seeing the entrenchments full of people, and that their approach was discovered, had no alternative but to advance. The confused rabble of horse and infantry came on, evincing all the pageantry of sluggish pomp. I had previously ordered, begged, and entreated that no one should fire, as it was not likely that they would gallop into the place, but leave them to expend their ammunition on the hillocks of stone. I stood with my telescope on one of these hillocks, to see whether I could recognise any of the party, as we had been informed that there were several rebel Griquas among them. When they came within gun-shot, they sheered off to the river,

where they intercepted some cattle belonging to our people, and a few sheep, the property of Mr. Hamilton; while a number went to the tops of the heights to look around for more booty. We counted their force, amounting to forty muskets, nine horses, and about ninety men, among whom were a number of Griquas well dressed.

“After debating for about an hour, a man was sent with a flag,—a rag suspended on the end of a rod. To prevent his seeing the weakness of the place, I met him at a distance. He did not hesitate to acknowledge that it was their intention to attack the place for purposes of revenge, and that Jantye Goeman, one of the principal men, though not the chief, begged first to have an interview with me at their camp, and the favour of a piece of tobacco. I refused to go to their camp, but engaged to meet him half way, if he was unarmed. After a long pause this was agreed to, when he advanced, and was soon followed by two more, the most ruffian-like beings I ever beheld. I went, accompanied by Aaron, and approaching Jantye Goeman, whom I knew well, he having been separated from the church at Griqua Town while I was

there, he drew near with his hat drawn over his eyes, and without looking me in the face, held out his hand. I said to him, 'Jantye, let me see your face; you may well blush that your old friend should find you in so horrible a position, among a people determined on the destruction of a missionary station.' 'I am dumb with shame,' was his reply; and he then manufactured an excuse for his being found among such company, adding that he would rather defend my person than see a weapon raised against me. He then informed me that there were several other Bergenaars, desperate characters, among them; but the head of the band was one Paul, chief of the Karoshebbers; intimating that it was necessary for me to see him before we could come to any understanding, for I found Jantye was not empowered to make arrangements. In fact, he appeared embarrassed; his countenance displaying a hidden conflict, and being the index of guilt. He assured me that to obtain an interview with Paul was out of the question, for ever since he had left home he had been vowing that he would rather die than exchange one word with me, or see my face. Perfectly unable to conceive how I had

become so odious in the eyes of any one, I made many inquiries, and at length learned that this Paul was one to whom I had preached the gospel, and he had sworn not to see me, lest I should succeed in persuading him to abandon his intentions of murder and rapine. After many entreaties, I got Jantye to go and invite Paul, while I remained on the spot. During his absence, one of the two forbidding characters who continued near me, remarked in a growling tone, that I better get out of the way, and let the band do with the Kafirs (Bechuanas) as they pleased. To this I replied, that they must first kill game before they could eat venison; that for my own part I had no intention to use any other weapon than prayer to God; but I would not vouch for what the people on the station might do; that I was the teacher of some, but the master of none. Jantye came slowly back again, as if unwilling to tell his message. It was, that Paul was resolute in his determination not to see me. At this moment a wagon appeared in sight; and fearing it might be some one from Griqua Town, who of course would be instantly despatched, I rose, and was proceeding to meet it, as it had to pass the camp of

the banditti. Jantye prevented my going. I then sent a man, who, on passing the camp, was taken prisoner. When observing some of the party shouldering their guns, and approaching the wagon, I got up and said to Jantye, 'I shall not see your face till the wagon and its owners are safe on the station.' He instantly ran off, and brought the wagon through the party; when, to our pleasing surprise, we found that our visitors were Mr. and Mrs. Archbell, from the Wesleyan mission at Platburg.

"Their safe arrival was a cause of gratitude, but the great point was yet undecided. I again met my half-way delegates; when, after a long conversation with Jantye, and another message to Paul, he made his appearance, slowly and sadly, as if following a friend to execution, or going himself to be slain. His face appeared incapable of a smile. Taking his hand, as that of an old friend, I expressed my surprise that he, who knew me, and who once listened to the message of salvation from my lips, should come with such a force for the express purpose of rooting out the mission. I referred him to the time when, more than once, I had slept at the door of his hut, and partaken of

his hospitality. He replied, that his purposes were unalterable, because, more than a year ago, a body of his men, who had passed into the interior to take cattle from the Barolongs, were attacked by Mothibi's people; and that, although Mothibi had fled, many of his subjects and the Batlaros were on the station. His eyes glared with fury as he said, 'I shall have their blood and their cattle too!' People in this country can scarcely conceive how difficult, not to say sometimes how impossible, it is to argue with such characters, for some will not hear; but Paul could argue; and having once listened to my voice with pleasure, the long time which had elapsed had not effaced the impressions made by the visit and presence of a teacher. Although I was not preaching, I spoke with great solemnity, asking him if the bleached bones on the Barolong and Kalagare plains, the souls his clubs and spears had hurried into eternity since he left home, and the innocent blood with which he had stained the desert but a few days ago, were not sufficient to glut his revenge; or, rather, to make him tremble for the judgments which such a career would certainly bring upon himself and his people, and which had already begun to

be poured out on the blood-guilty tribes of the Orange river? After having talked to him for some time in this strain, I begged him to call to mind his first and only visit to me while with Africaner; and his declaration, at a subsequent period, that he and his people were leaving, because it was rumoured that Africaner was about to remove from the country, in which his presence had been the bond of union; entreating him to compare his state of mind at that time with what it was now. This had scarcely passed my lips, when he ordered his men to go and bring the cattle which had been taken from our people, and added, that he would not go a step farther, but return by the way he came. In the course of a subsequent conversation, I inquired why he was so determined on not seeing me. 'I could not forget your kindness to me in Namaqua-land,' was the reply. In this the reader will observe a fresh instance of the omnipotence of love, even among the most barbarous of the human race."

These same murderers and robbers afterwards said that such had been their terrors of conscience for nights before, that a hyena or

jackal had been enough to frighten them from their rendezvous.

This savage horde, on leaving the station, resumed their plundering career, and finally fell into a snare that was laid for them, and almost every one of them came to a violent and miserable death. These were among the last efforts of the wandering hordes. The judgments of God fell on them. Pestilence, prodigality, and beasts of prey, deprived them of their thousands of cattle; disease and famine thinned their camps; till, at length, in places which had echoed with the shouts of savage triumph over slaughtered tribes, and the noises of rude revelry and debauch, nothing is heard but the howl of the hyena, as an appropriate funeral dirge over the remains of a people, the victims of ferocity and lust.

These awful judgments on some were not without the most salutary results to others. So evidently was the hand of God displayed, that the atheistical Bechuanas were wonderfully impressed with the truth of an overruling Providence; which doctrine they had, as a nation, hitherto treated as visionary and false. They had ocular demonstration of what we had told them was the word of God, that the

triumphing of the wicked is short, and that Jehovah would scatter them that delight in war. The notorious apostate, Jacob Cloete, the ringleader of that section which had scattered devastation among the Kuruman tribes, was impoverished by his companions in crime, and retired to Berend's people a beggar. He visited us as such at the Kuruman. It would not have been unnatural to expect that the Bechuanas, to whom he had been as the demon of destruction, would have treated him with contumely, or sought revenge. No: though they were yet comparative heathens, they looked on his tall, haggard form, and emaciated countenance, with sympathy; and seeing him look wild, and start, as if the air he breathed was charged with spectres, arrows, and death, they presented him with food, and retired, remarking, "He is seized by terrors." He soon afterwards died, the victim of remorse and shame.

CHAPTER XIV.

Outpouring of the Spirit—Wonderful works of God—Another journey—Interesting incidents—The stolen children.

THE day of promise dawns at last. The chapel becomes too small to hold the people that crowd to hear the word. The sun of righteousness is rising on this benighted people. Mr. Hamilton, the father of the mission, returns to his field, and rejoices in the prospect of harvest. The glad missionary writes :

“ Shortly after this we were favoured with the manifest outpouring of the Spirit from on high. The moral wilderness was now about to blossom. Sable cheeks bedewed with tears attracted our observation. To see females weep was nothing extraordinary ; it was, according to Bechuana notions, their province, and theirs alone. Men would not weep. After having, by the rite of circumcision, become men, they scorned to shed a tear. In

family or national afflictions, it was the woman's work to weep and wail; the man's to sit in sullen silence, often brooding over deeds of revenge and death. The simple gospel now melted their flinty hearts; and eyes now wept, which never before shed the tear of hallowed sorrow. Notwithstanding our earnest desires and fervent prayers, we were taken by surprise. We had so long been accustomed to indifference, that we felt unprepared to look on a scene which perfectly overwhelmed our minds. Our temporary little chapel became a Bochim—a place of weeping; and the sympathy of feeling spread from heart to heart, so that even infants wept. Some, after gazing with extreme intensity of feeling on the preacher, would fall down in hysterics, and others were carried out in a state of great exhaustion."

Aaron Josephs, who had once been a runaway slave, was awakened to a sense of his sin and danger, and was soon baptized. The scene was deeply impressive and exciting. The sounds most frequently heard through the village for days afterwards, were singing and prayer. Prayer-meetings were held from house to house, and continued till a late hour,

and then the people would come together again before morning dawned. What a wonderful change was this! Behold these African savages in the dust at the feet of Jesus, crying for mercy!

Now the natives undertook to build a house of worship. All who were interested, even women and children, took hold together, carrying clay, lath from the bushes, material for thatching, and whatever else they could get to help on the work. The building was completed in May, 1829, and in the following month six persons were baptized. This was not done without much prayer and deliberation. These had given very satisfactory proofs of a change of heart. After particular private examination, separately, they were found to possess a much larger knowledge of Divine truth than was expected; and their answers were most satisfactory. It was truly gratifying to observe the simplicity of their faith, implicitly relying on the atonement of Christ, of which they appeared to have a very clear conception, considering the previous darkness of their minds on such subjects. They were therefore baptized on the first Sabbath of July, when other circumstances

concurred to impart additional interest to the solemnity. It appeared as if it had been the design of Providence to call together, from all quarters, an unusual and most unexpected number of spectators from Philippolis, Campbell, Griqua Town, and Boochoap. From these places there were present about fifty Griquas, who happened to congregate here previous to their proceeding on a hunting expedition. These were suitably and profitably impressed with what transpired, for they themselves had been for some time previous in a lukewarm state, and were thus awakened to jealousy about their own condition, by seeing the Bechuanas pressing into the fold of Christ, while they by their backslidings were being thrust out.

There were also present, parties from different places of the interior, who had come for purposes of barter. The place of worship was crowded to excess, and the greatest interest excited by a scene which was indeed a novelty to many, the service being conducted in the Bechuana language. After a sermon on John i. 29, a suitable address was given to the candidates, and when a number of questions had been asked, they were baptized,

with five of their children. Among them was Rachel, the wife of Aaron, whom Mr. Hamilton addressed in Dutch, she being more conversant in that language; the others were Bechuanas. In the evening they sat down together to commemorate the death of our Lord.

“Our number,” says the missionary, “was twelve. It was an interesting, cheering, and encouraging season to our souls; and we concluded the delightful exercises of the day by taking coffee together in the evening. Our feelings on that occasion were such as our pen would fail to describe. We were as those that dreamed, while we realized the promise on which our souls had often hung: ‘He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.’ The hour had arrived on which the whole energies of our souls had been intensely fixed, when we should see a church, however small, gathered from among a people who had so long boasted that neither Jesus, nor we, his servants, should ever see Bechuanas worship and confess him as their king.”

Thus, after ten years of darkness and appa-

rently fruitless toil, the day-spring from on high visits this people. And here the missionaries take occasion to speak of the fact that the GOSPEL is the only power that can make a savage people civilized. They find that to make the fruit good, the tree must be good, and now the glorious results began to appear in this hopeless and degraded race of men. When they felt the power of the gospel on their hearts, they began to rise from the rank of brutes, and to feel that they were men. Now it was common to hear them exclaiming, "We have been like the beasts before God, what shall we do to be saved?" and the missionaries, as they heard such words, were moved as was the aged Simeon when he held the infant Saviour in his arms.

The natives began to make decent clothing for themselves. Mrs. Moffat opened a sewing school; for the same gospel which had taught them that they were spiritually miserable, blind, and naked, discovered to them also that they needed reform externally, and thus prepared their minds to adopt those modes of comfort, cleanliness, and convenience which they had been accustomed to view only as the peculiarities of a strange people. Thus, by

the slow but certain progress of gospel principles, whole families became clothed and in their right mind. Ornaments which were formerly in high repute, as adorning, but more frequently disfiguring their persons, were now turned into bullion to purchase skins of animals, which, being prepared almost as soft as cloth, were made into jackets, trousers, and gowns. When opportunity was afforded by the visit of a trader, British manufactures were eagerly purchased.

For a long period, when a man was seen to make a pair of trowsers for himself, or a woman a gown, it was a sure intimation that we might expect additions to our inquirers; abandoning the custom of painting the body, and beginning to wash with water, was with them what cutting off the hair was among the South Sea islanders—a public renunciation of heathenism. In the progress of improvement during the years which followed, and by which many individuals who made no profession of the gospel were influenced, we were frequently amused. A man might be seen in a jacket with but one sleeve, because the other was not finished, or he lacked material to complete it. Another in a leathern or duffel

jacket, with the sleeves of different colours, or of fine printed cotton. Gowns were seen like Joseph's coat of many colours, and dresses of such fantastic shapes, as were calculated to excite a smile.

These efforts, however trifling they may appear, were the precursors of a mighty change, and the elements of a system which was destined to sweep away the filth and customs of former generations, and to open up numberless channels for commerce, which, but for the gospel, might have remained for ever closed.

The reform extended into all the affairs of life. They must have chairs, and chests, and candles, and many other things which showed the progress of light and civilization among them. The desire for these things was always attended with a desire for the word of God. The expressions of the inquirers and of the believers were often very striking. "I seek Jesus," one would say; and another, "I am feeling after God; I have been wandering, unconscious of my danger, among beasts of prey; the day has dawned, I see my danger." A third would say, "I have been sleeping in the lion's den; or been blown to and fro like

a calabash upon the water, and might have sunk."

A woman on her death-bed, but before she was considered in danger, declared the most lively hope of eternal life through the atonement of Jesus. A few days subsequent to this declaration, feeling that death was near, she called her husband and friends, and addressed them in language affecting and arousing, exhorting them to believe in the words of Jehovah, to flee for refuge to Jesus as the only Saviour. "I am going to die." This was startling language from the lips of a Bechuana. Some listened with amazement, and others wept. "Weep not," she said, "because I am going to leave you, but weep for your sins and weep for your souls. With me all is well, for do not suppose that I die like a beast, or that I shall sleep for ever in the grave. No! Jesus has died for my sins; he has said he will save me. I am going to be with him." Shortly after bearing this testimony, she, who a few months before, according to her own language, was as ignorant as the cattle in the fold, now left the world with the full assurance of an eternal life beyond the grave.

In this year, (1829,) the station was visited by some chiefs from a people called Matabele. They came to see the wonderful change of which they had heard as having taken place among the Bechuanas. The houses, the ditches conveying water out of the bed of the river, and the smith's forge, filled them with admiration and astonishment, which they expressed, not in the wild gestures generally made by the mere plebeian, but by the utmost gravity and profound veneration, as well as the most respectful demeanour. "You are men, we are but children," said one; while the other observed, "Moselekatse must be taught all these things." When standing in the hall of our house, looking at the strange furniture of a civilized abode, the eye of one caught a small looking-glass, on which he gazed with admiration. Mrs. Moffat handed him one which was considerably larger; he looked intensely at his reflected countenance, and never having seen it before, supposed it was that of one of his attendants on the other side; he very abruptly put his hand behind it, telling him to be gone, but looking again at the same face, he cautiously turned it, and seeing nothing, he returned the glass with great gra-

vity to Mrs. Moffat, saying that he could not trust it!

Nothing appeared to strike them so forcibly as the public worship in our chapel. They saw men like themselves meet together with great decorum; mothers hushing their babes, or hastily retiring if they made any noise, and the elder children sitting perfectly silent. When the missionary ascended the pulpit, they listened to the hymn sung, and though, from their ignorance of the Bechuana language, they could not understand all that was said, they were convinced that something very serious was the subject of the address. The order and fervour which pervaded all parts of the service, bewildered their minds, which, from their infancy, had been accustomed to observe every public meeting introduced and characterized by the hoarse war-song and displays of chivalry. They were inquisitive about every thing, and were surprised to find that the hymns were not war-songs, expressive of the wild reveries which the associations of music brought to their minds.

At their earnest solicitations Mr. Moffat accompanied them on their return home, and the journey was marked by some interesting

incidents. But we must pass them by, though we cannot withhold the description of a singular dwelling which he saw in his travels.

“My attention was arrested by a beautiful and gigantic tree, standing in a defile leading into an extensive and woody ravine, between a high range of mountains. Seeing some individuals employed on the ground under its shade, and the conical points of what looked like houses in miniature, protruding through its evergreen foliage, I proceeded thither, and found that the tree was inhabited by several families of Bakones, the aborigines of the country. I ascended by the notched trunk, and found, to my amazement, no less than seventeen of these aërial abodes, and three others unfinished. On reaching the topmost hut, about thirty feet from the ground, I entered, and sat down. Its only furniture was the hay which covered the floor, a spear, a spoon, and a bowl full of locusts. Not having eaten any thing that day, and from the novelty of my situation, not wishing to return immediately to the wagons, I asked a woman who sat at the door with a babe at her breast, permission to eat. This she granted with pleasure, and soon brought me more in a

powdered state. Several more females came from the neighbouring roosts, stepping from branch to branch, to see the stranger, who was to them as great a curiosity as the tree was to him. I then visited the different abodes, which were on several principal branches. The structure of these houses was very simple. An oblong scaffold, about seven feet wide, is formed of straight sticks. On one end of this platform a small cone is formed, also of straight sticks, and thatched with grass. A person can nearly stand upright in it; the diameter of the floor is about six feet. The house stands on the end of the oblong, so as to leave a little square space before the door. On the day previous I had passed several villages, some containing forty houses, all built on poles about seven or eight feet from the ground, in the form of a circle; the ascent and descent is by a knotty branch of a tree placed in front of the house. In the centre of the circle there is always a heap of the bones of game they have killed. Such were the domiciles of the impoverished thousands of the aborigines of the country, who, having been scattered and peeled by Moselekatse, had neither herd or stall, but subsisted

on locusts, roots, and the chase. They adopted this mode of architecture to escape the lions which abounded in the country. During the day the families descended to the shade beneath to dress their daily food. When the inhabitants increased, they supported the augmented weight on the branches, by upright sticks, but when lightened of their load, they removed these for firewood."

Mr. Moffat pursued his journey with these chiefs, until he came to their country, which gave evidence of former improvement beyond any thing he had seen in South Africa. The ruins of many towns showed signs of immense labour and perseverance. The walls and door-ways were also neatly ornamented with a kind of architraves and cornices. The pillars supporting the roof in the form of pilasters, projecting from the walls, and adorned with flutings and other designs, showed much taste in the architectresses. This taste, however, was exercised on fragile materials, for there was nothing in the building like stone, except the foundations. The houses, like all others in the interior, were round, with conical roofs, extending beyond the walls, so as to afford considerable shade, or what might be

called a verandah. The raising of the stone fences must have been a work of immense labour, for the materials had all to be brought on the shoulders of men, and the quarries, where these materials were probably obtained, were at a considerable distance. The neighbouring hills also gave ample demonstration of human perseverance, with instruments of the most paltry description.

Arriving at their destination, Mr. Moffat was received by the king Moselekatse, in extraordinary style.

“We proceeded directly to the town, and on riding into the centre of the large fold, which was capable of holding ten thousand head of cattle, we were rather taken by surprise to find it lined by eight hundred warriors, besides two hundred which were concealed in each side of the entrance, as if in ambush. We were beckoned to dismount, which we did, holding our horses' bridles in our hands. The warriors at the gate instantly rushed in with hideous yells, and leaping from the earth with a kind of kilt around their bodies, hanging like loose tails, and their large shields, frightened our horses. They then joined the circle, falling into rank with as

much order as if they had been accustomed to European tactics. Here we stood surrounded by warriors whose kilts were of ape skins, and their legs and arms adorned with the hair and tails of oxen, their shields reaching to their chins, and their heads adorned with feathers.

“Although in the centre of a town, all was silent as the midnight hour, while the men were motionless as statues. Eyes only were seen to move, and there was a rich display of fine white teeth. After some minutes of profound silence, which was only interrupted by the breathing of our horses, the war-song burst forth. There was harmony, it is true, and they beat time with their feet, producing a sound like hollow thunder, but some parts of it was music befitting the nether regions, especially when they imitated the groanings of the dying on the field of battle, and the yells and hissings of the conquerors. Another simultaneous pause ensued, and still we wondered what was intended, till out marched the monarch from behind the lines, followed by a number of men bearing baskets and bowls of food. He came up to us, and having been instructed in our mode of salutation, gave each a clumsy but hearty shake of the hand. He

then politely turned to the food, which was placed at our feet, and invited us to partake. By this time the wagons were seen in the distance, and having intimated our wish to be directed to a place where we might encamp in the outskirts of the town, he accompanied us, keeping fast hold of my right arm, though not in the most graceful manner, yet with perfect familiarity. 'The land is before you; you are come to your son. You must sleep where you please.' When the 'moving houses,' as the wagons were called, drew near, he took a firmer grasp of my arm, and looked on them with unutterable surprise; and this man, the terror of thousands, drew back with fear, as one in doubt as to whether they were not living creatures. When the oxen were unyoked he approached the wagon with the utmost caution, still holding me by one hand, and placing the other on his mouth, indicating his surprise. He looked at them very intently, particularly the wheels, and when told of how many pieces of wood each wheel was composed, his wonder was increased. After examining all very closely, one mystery yet remained, how the large band of iron surrounding the felloes of the wheel

came to be in one piece, without either end or joint. 'Umbate, my friend and fellow-traveller, whose visit to our station had made him much wiser than his master, took hold of my right hand, and related what he had seen. 'My eyes,' he said, 'saw that very hand,' pointing to mine, 'cut these bars of iron, take a piece off one end, and then join them as you now see them.' A minute inspection ensued to discover the welded part. 'Does he give medicine to the iron?' was the monarch's inquiry. 'No,' said 'Umbate, 'nothing is used but fire, a hammer, and a chisel.' Moselekatse then returned to the town, where the warriors were still standing as he left them, who received him with immense bursts of applause.

“During one of my first interviews with Moselekatse, the following incident took place, which shows that, however degraded and cruel man may become, he is capable of being subdued by kindness. He drew near to the spot where I stood, with some attendants bearing dishes of food; the two chiefs who had been at the Kuruman were with me, but on the approach of their sovereign they bowed and withdrew, shouting, as usual, 'Baaite 'nkhosi

enkolu,' but were instantly desired to return. Mosekelatse, placing his left hand on my shoulder, and his right on his breast, addressed me in the following language: 'Machobane, (his father's name,) I call you such because you have been my father. You have made my heart as white as milk; milk is not white to-day, my heart is white. I cease not to wonder at the love of a stranger. You never saw me before, but you love me more than my own people. You fed me when I was hungry; you clothed me when I was naked; you carried me in your bosom;' and, raising my right arm with his, added, 'that arm shielded me from my enemies.' On my replying, I was unconscious of having done him any such services, he instantly pointed to the two ambassadors who were sitting at my feet, saying, 'These are great men; 'Umbate is my right hand. When I sent them from my presence to see the land of the white men, I sent my ears, my eyes, my mouth; what they heard I heard, what they saw I saw, and what they said, it was Moselekatse who said it. You fed them and clothed them, and when they were to be slain, you were their shield. You did it unto me. You did it

unto Moselekatse, the son of Machobane.' These expressions received additional colourings from his retinue, who added fresh fuel to the flame of pride which ever burned in his heart, by assuring him that it was the renown of his mighty name which had commanded the homage of distant nations. The testimony of his gratitude was duly appreciated and acknowledged, and the assurance given that it was in my power to tell him news. This was the news of the love of God, to which he listened at first with apparent attention, but his countenance soon betrayed a truant mind, while his eyes looked with delight on the droves of sleek cattle approaching the town, and which possessed charms infinitely more captivating than the topics of our conversation.

“The following morning was marked by a melancholy display of that so-called heroism which prefers death to dishonour. A feast had been proclaimed, cattle had been slaughtered, and many hearts beat high in anticipation of wallowing in all the excesses of savage delight; eating, drinking, dancing, and singing the victor's song over the slain, whose bones lay bleached on the neighbouring plains. Every heart appeared elate but one.

He was a man of rank, and what was called an Entuna, (an officer,) who wore on his head the usual badge of dignity. He was brought to head-quarters. His arm bore no shield, nor his hand a spear; he had been divested of these, which had been his glory. He was brought into the presence of the king and his chief council, charged with a crime, for which it was in vain to expect pardon, even at the hands of a more humane government. He bowed his fine elastic figure, and kneeled before the judge. The case was investigated silently, which gave solemnity to the scene. Not a whisper was heard among the listening audience, and the voices of the council were only audible to each other and the nearest spectators. The prisoner, though on his knees, had something dignified and noble in his mien. Not a muscle of his countenance moved, but his bright black eyes indicated a feeling of intense interest, which the moving balance between life and death only could produce. The case required little investigation; the charges were clearly substantiated, and the culprit pleaded guilty. But, alas! he knew it was at a bar where none ever heard the heart-reviving sound of pardon, even

for offences small compared with his. A pause ensued, during which the silence of death pervaded the assembly. At length the monarch spoke, and addressing the prisoner, said, 'You are a dead man, but I shall do to-day what I never did before; I spare your life for the sake of my friend and father'—pointing to the spot where I stood. 'I know his heart weeps at the shedding of blood; for his sake I spare your life. He has travelled from a far country to see me, and he has made my heart white. He has pleaded with me not to go to war, nor destroy life. I wish him, when he returns to his own home again, to return with a heart as white as he has made mine. I spare you for his sake, for I love him, and he has saved the lives of my people. But,' continued the king, 'you must be degraded for life; you must no more associate with the nobles of the land, nor enter the towns of the princes of the people; nor ever again mingle in the dance of the mighty. Go to the poor of the field, and let your companions be the inhabitants of the desert.'

“The sentence passed, the pardoned man was expected to bow in grateful adoration to him whom he was wont to look upon, and

exalt in songs applicable only to One, to whom belongs universal sway over the destinies of man. But no! holding his hands clasped on his bosom, he replied, ‘O king, afflict not my heart! I have merited thy displeasure; let me be slain like the warrior; I cannot live with the poor.’ And, raising his hand to the ring he wore on his brow, he continued: ‘How can I live among the dogs of the king, and disgrace these badges of honour which I won among the spears and shields of the mighty? No, I cannot live! Let me die, O Pezoolu!’ His request was granted, and his hands tied erect over his head. Now, my exertions to save his life were vain. He disdained the boon on the conditions offered, preferring to die with the honours he had won at the point of the spear—honours which even the act that condemned him did not tarnish—to exile and poverty, among the children of the desert. He was led forth, a man walking on each side. My eye followed him till he reached the top of a precipice, over which he was precipitated into the deep pool of the river beneath, where the crocodiles, accustomed to such meals, were yawning to devour

him ere he could reach the bottom! This was a Sabbath morning scene, such as heathenism exhibits to the view of the Christian philanthropist; and such as is calculated to excite in his bosom feelings of the deepest sympathy. This magnanimous heathen knew of no hereafter. He was without God and without hope. But however deplorable the state of such a person may be, he will not be condemned as equally guilty with those who, in the midst of life and knowledge, recklessly rush into the presence of their Maker and their Judge. We have often read of the patriotism of the Greeks and Romans, and heard that magnanimity of soul extolled which could sacrifice honour, property, and life itself, for the public good, rather than become the vassals of a foe, and live divested of the poor trappings of human glory; if this be virtue, there are, even among Afric's sons, men not inferior to the most illustrious of the Romans. The very monarch who was thus influenced by the presence of the Christian missionary, needed only to ask his warriors, 'Who among you will become a sacrifice for the safety of the state, and the country's

good?" and his choicest men would have made good the challenge.

"Moselekatse's conduct in this affair produced a strange impression among his people, some of whom regarded me as an extraordinary being, who could thus influence one more terrible to them than the fiercest lion of the forest. His government, so far as I could discover, was the very essence of despotism."

Among the people who had joined the party with which Mr. Moffat had come to this barbarous people, was a poor man with his wife, in search of two children who had been carried off as captives by a party of Matabale warriors. The story of his attempt to obtain his children is thus told by Mr. Moffat:—

"The owner of his sons came and seated himself before my wagon, as I drew near to witness the transaction. The poor man spread his ragged mantle on the ground, and laid on it a few strings of beads and some native-made ornaments, valuable to him, but on which the haughty noble would scarcely deign to cast his eye. The father sighed to see his look of scorn. He then drew from his tattered skins, which he had brought with him, and

on which he reposed at night, a small dirty bag, containing a few more strings of half-worn beads, and placed them beside the former: these were borrowed. The scornful look was again repeated. He then took from his arms two old copper rings, and rings of the same material from his ears. The chief answered the anxious eyes of the now desponding father with a frown, and an indignant shake of the head. He then took from his neck the only remaining link of beads which he possessed, and which it was evident he had worn many a year. This, with an old, half-worn knife, he added to the offered ransom. It was his all; and it is impossible even to forget the expression of those eyes, which, though from national habit would not shed the tear of sorrow, were the index of the deepest anxiety as to the result. Neither the man or his ornaments excited the smallest emotion in the bosom of the haughty chief, who talked to them around him about general affairs, maintaining the most perfect indifference to the object of paternal agony before his eyes. He at last arose; and being solicited by one who felt something of a father's love, to pity the old man, who had

walked nearly two hundred miles, and brought his little all to purchase his own children, he replied with a sneer, that one had died of cold the preceding winter, and what the father offered for the other was not worth looking at; adding, 'I want oxen.' 'I have not even a goat,' replied the father. A sigh—it was a heavy sigh—burst from his bosom:—one dead, and not permitted even to see the other with his eyes. The chief walked off, while the man sat leaning his head on the palm of his right hand, and his eyes fixed on the ground, apparently lost to every thing but his now only son, now doubly dear from the loss of his brother, and he, alas! far beyond his power to rescue. On taking up his mantle to retire, he and his party being obliged to leave early to return to the place whence they came, he was told to be of good cheer, and an effort would be made to get his son. He started at the sound, threw his mantle at my feet, and spreading out his hands to what he had offered, said, 'Take these, my father, and pity me.' 'Retain them for yourself,' was the reply. He kissed the hand of his pledged benefactor, and departed, saying, *Ki tla na le*

boroko. 'I shall have slumber,' (peace of mind.)

"In the course of the following day, a favourable moment was sought to bring the case before the king. He instantly ordered his brother, the individual who possessed the boy, to wait upon me, which he promptly did: and on receiving several pounds of a valuable kind of bead, he immediately despatched a messenger to bring the boy, who was at a distance, and who arrived the following day.

"On my return to Mosega, and approaching the base of one of those hills amidst which the town lay embosomed, a human being was seen rushing down the steep towards the wagons, with a rapidity which led us to fear that she would fall headlong. Every eye was upon her, while some said, 'It is the alarm of war.' The wagon-driver who sat by me, most emphatically exclaimed, 'It is a woman, either running from a lion or to save a child.' Yes, it was the mother. She had heard from some of the party who preceded the wagons that morning, that her son was there: she had ascended the hill

behind which the town lay, and gazed till the wagon emerged from a ravine. Frantic with joy, she ran breathless towards me. To prevent her coming in contact with the wagon wheels, I sprang to the ground, when she seized my hands, kissed and bathed them with her tears. She spoke not one word, but wept aloud for joy. Her son drew near, when she instantly rushed forward, and clasped him in her arms."

While the missionary remained here, he laboured diligently to prepare the way for the introduction of the gospel. He set before the king and the people the glory and power of those nations where God is worshipped, and the dreadful miseries of those who live and die without loving and serving the "King of kings and Lord of lords." Once while speaking with the king, Mr. Moffat alluded to man's ruin and redemption.

"Why," he asked, "are you so earnest that I abandon all war, and not kill men?"

"Look on the human bones which lie scattered over your dominions," was the reply. "They speak in awful language, and to me they say, 'Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man also will his blood be shed.'"

This was fearful language in the ears of such a murderer. "You say," he added, "that the dead will rise again." The remarks on this subject were startling in the ears of a savage, and he interrupted them by hastily assuring the missionary that he would not go to war.

Mr. Moffat was at length obliged to leave this people, and return to his own field. The king accompanied him a considerable distance on his journey, and expressed his desire that missionaries should be sent to his country. Thus the way was opened for the introduction of the light of divine truth among a people more cruel and dreadful than any among whom missionaries have ever laboured. If any doubt is felt on this point, the reader will find the proof of it in the awful descriptions of the customs of the tribes of South Africa, when they go to war; but which descriptions we do not think it useful to spread out upon these pages. The "tender mercies" of the heathen are cruel. One of the most striking characteristics of pagans will always be that they are to so great a degree without natural affection. It is the gospel that makes men kind, and gentle and forgiving.

CHAPTER XV.

A new Church—Printing—The Gospel—Natives' wonder at the Printing-press—New Books—Another War.

DURING the absence of Mr. Moffat, the work of God had advanced among the Bechuanas. After his return, a new house of worship was commenced, which was not completed for several years. The money necessary for this work, Mr. Moffat expected to raise in the colony, but when the natives heard that he was going abroad for aid, they determined to do more themselves. Some subscribed oxen, others goats, and a few, money, though it was still very scarce among them, and a number engaged to give some months' labour.

When the work was fairly in progress, Mr. Moffat proceeded on his journey to Cape Town, which he reached in October, 1830. He took with him the translation of the gospel by Luke, upon which he had long been labouring, and now sought to print it. But there were no

printers in the colony who could set the types for the language, and he learned the art of printing, himself; and, being joined by a young missionary, named Edwards, he persevered until the work was completed. A small hymn book was also printed, and, with these precious treasures, Mr. and Mrs. Moffat returned to their station, where they arrived in June, 1831, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, who had been sent out from England to join the same mission. They carried also a printing press and type, paper and ink, and funds to enable them to go on with the building the church.

Great was the joy of the people, when they had the word of eternal life in their own hands. This was a new era in the mission, and the press was soon called into operation, when lessons, spelling books, and catechisms were prepared for the schools. Although many of the natives had been informed how books were printed, nothing could exceed their surprise when they saw a white sheet, after disappearing for a moment, emerge, spangled with letters. After a few noisy exclamations, one obtained a sheet with which he bounded into the village, showing it to every one he

met, and asserting that the missionaries had made it in a moment, with a round black hammer (a printer's ball) and a shake of the arm. The description of such a juggling process soon brought a crowd to see the segatisho, (press,) which has since proved an auxiliary of vast importance.

Dr. Philip, the distinguished minister at the Cape, visited the mission the ensuing year, and his presence greatly strengthened the hearts of the labourers. With his advice, a new station was commenced at Motito, about forty miles north-east of the Kuruman, where now a lovely village may be seen, with a thriving population.

While Dr. Philip was at the mission, five persons made public profession of their faith in the gospel. Most of these were foreigners, who, by the wars in the interior, had, in the mysterious providence of God, been brought by a way they knew not, to find an eternal home by becoming fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and often did they endeavour to describe, with native eloquence, the distinguishing love and mercy of that God who had directed their feet to the Kuruman mission. Mamonyatsi, one of these,

some years after, died in the faith. She was a Matabele captive, and had accompanied Mr. Moffat from the interior; had remained some time in the service of Mrs. Moffat, and early displayed a readiness to learn to read, with much quickness of understanding. From the time of her being united with the church, till the day of her death, she was a living epistle of the power of the gospel.

One day, says Mr. Moffat, while visiting the sick, as I entered her premises, I found her sitting, weeping, with a portion of the word of God in her hand.

Addressing her, I said, "My child, what is the cause of your sorrow? Is the baby still unwell?" "No," she replied, "my baby is well." "Your mother-in-law?" I inquired. "No, no," she said, "it is my own dear mother, who bore me." Here she again gave vent to her grief, and, holding out the gospel of Luke, in a hand wet with tears, she said, "My mother will never see this word, she will never hear this good news!" She wept again and again, and said, "Oh, my mother and my friends, they live in heathen darkness; and shall they die without seeing the light which has shone on me, and without tasting

that love which I have tasted !” Raising her eyes to heaven, she sighed a prayer, and I heard the words again, “My mother, my mother !”

This was the expression of the affection of one of Afric’s sable daughters, whose heart had been taught to mourn over the ignorance of a far-distant mother. Shortly after this evidence of divine love in her soul, I was called upon to watch her dying pillow, and descended with her to Jordan’s bank. She feared no rolling billow. She looked on the new-born babe, and commended it to the care of her God and Saviour. The last words I heard from her faltering lips were, “My mother.”

How affecting is this evidence of the power of filial love in the heart of a poor African ! She longed to give the bread of life to her poor mother, who never heard of Jesus and the way to heaven !

Mr. Moffat next undertook the translation of Scripture lessons, which proved a great blessing to the natives. New and enlarged editions of elementary works were also printed, and portions of the Scripture lessons were turned off, each additional sheet being received by the readers with increasing avidity

It was no uncommon thing to see the children around the printing-office door, waiting for a new sheet, and inquiring when additions were to be made to their little treasures of knowledge. We were visited at this time with refreshing showers of Divine blessing, and very considerable accessions were made to the number of believers. Strangers from distant tribes were received into the fellowship of the children of God. Among these, three very aged women, all grandmothers, were striking instances of the power of Divine grace. One of them has finished her course since the author came to England. Although blind, the eyes of her understanding were opened by the entrance of that word which giveth light. From that time till her death, a period of several years, she continued to adorn her profession by a consistent walk and conversation. The infirmities of age prevented her attending public worship as often as she desired. Two or three months prior to her decease she was confined to the house, when, as Mr. Edwards writes, "she appeared to dwell with delight on the marvellous goodness of the Lord to her;" and adds,—

"On one occasion when I visited her, I had

positively to restrain her, that she might not exhaust her strength. Sensible that she could not survive, she admonished all who visited her to think for eternity. A few days before her death she wished her children to be gathered together in her presence, desiring to speak to them before she left them. They surrounded her bed; and when informed that all were present, she addressed them:—‘ My children, I wish you to know that I am to be separated from you, but you must not on that account be sorrowful. Do not murmur at the thought of my decease. The Lord has spared me not a few days; He has taken care of me many years, and has ever been merciful to me. I have wanted no good thing. I know Him to whom I have trusted the salvation of my soul. My hope is fixed on Jesus Christ, who has died for my sins, and lives to intercede. I shall soon die and be at rest; but my wish is, that you will attend to these my words. My children, hold fast your faith in Christ. Trust in Him, love Him, and let not the world turn you away from Him; and however you may be reviled and troubled in the world, hold very fast the word of God, and faint not in persevering prayer. My last

word is, strive to live together in peace. Avoid disputes. Follow peace with all, and especially among yourselves. Love each other; comfort each other; assist and take care of each other in the Lord.' ”

Thus ended the career of Mamotlobogi, whom the author knew when her enmity to the gospel made her a terror to her own children; but in answer to many prayers she was thus completely transformed. She was often seen leaning on a stick, led by a grandchild to the house of prayer.

Another of these grandmothers, who had wallowed in the very sewers of heathenism, the dupe of all the superstitions of former times, had been an active agent of the wicked one in opposing the progress of the gospel. As the representative of by-gone ages—for the snows of many a year were seen through the mass of grease and dirt which adorned her head—she was regarded with reverence by the younger females on the station, as the oracle of ancient wisdom. She was wont to tell them what they knew not, of the customs of their ancestors. Had she been a man, her contaminating influence would long have been arrested; for there were those on the station

whose influence would have driven her to seek an asylum elsewhere, but she was borne with because she was a woman. She hated the very sight of the place of worship, and had taught many to blaspheme. One day she entered the chapel in quest of a child, and was constrained to sit a few minutes. She had not heard many sentences, when she fled from the hated spot. On the Sabbath following she came again, when all who saw her felt alarmed, lest violence was intended against some one; but she quietly heard the voice of mercy, and retired in an orderly manner. In the course of a few days she came to the missionary in a state bordering on distraction. "My sins, my sins!" was the language of her lips; tears streaming down her already furrowed cheeks. Her half frantic soul would hear no comfort, nor listen to any counsel. Mr. Moffat says, "Night after night she would call me out of bed to tell her what was to become of her soul. One day meeting her in the street, with both hands she grasped mine, and, as if her heart would break, exclaimed, 'To live I cannot—I cannot die.' Again she was directed to the Lamb of God, and the fountain opened for her sins; but she inter-

rupted, by saying, 'You say the blood of Christ cleanses from all sins; do you know the number of mine? Look to yonder grassy plain, and count the blades of grass or the drops of dew; these are nothing to the amount of my transgressions.' After continuing in this state several weeks, she was enabled to believe, when the being who once persecuted and cursed all who bore the Christian name, a mass of filth, which had given to her haggard and aged form an unearthly look, was found sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in her right mind, adoring the riches of Divine grace, to one who was, as she would describe herself, 'like the mire of the street.' Remarking to her, one day, that, from her constant attendance on every means of instruction, she seemed like the Psalmist of old, desiring 'to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever,' she replied, 'I am old in the world, but I am still a child in the school of Christ.' She continued fervent in spirit; the subject of Divine mercy and love so completely absorbing all the powers of her mind, that when visited in seasons of affliction, it was difficult to elicit any thing about her disease; *for* her answer commenced with the

flesh, it was certain to end with the spirit. When subscriptions were making for the Auxiliary Missionary Society, she one day brought in her hand her mite—a pumpkin; and when my wife remarked that she might retain it, and she would put down her name for a small sum, her soul seemed to melt within her, while she asked, ‘Who is so great a debtor to the Saviour as I am? Is it too small? I shall go and borrow another.’”

Villages several miles distant were regularly visited by the missionaries, and after long years of fruitless labour, the Spirit of the Lord was at length poured out, and souls were converted to Christ.

Mr. Moffat, in company with an expedition from Cape Town to explore the interior of the country, made another visit to the country of the Matabele, to the King Moselekatse, who will be well remembered. He spent two months with this king, and again tried to prevail upon him to relax his cruel oppression, and give to his people something of the enjoyments of freedom. Mr. Moffat endeavoured to obtain some knowledge of the views of this people as to the spiritual world; but they seemed to have little or no idea of the soul or

of God. While he was with them, Mr. Moffat received letters from the station which he had left, and among them was one from some American missionaries, proposing to commence a mission among the Matabale. He laid the subject before the king, and having obtained his cordial consent, Mr. Moffat returned once more to his own station.

During his absence, Mr. Edwards had printed several tracts in the language, and now a Catechism and lessons from the Scriptures were put to press. In the mean time, the work of conversion was steadily advancing among the people, and the demand for books was on the increase.

Messrs. Wilson, Venables and Lindley, the American missionaries, went, in 1836, to Mosega, and established themselves there, but were compelled by the inroads of the Dutch farmers, and by sickness, to abandon the station.

Mr. Moffat, near the close of this year, made a journey along the Kolong river, and found large congregations of attentive readers, and a demand for books which he could not supply. He ministered to thousands, and not to their souls only; but they brought their

sick to him, that he might give them medicine. He finally reached a village called Mosheu, where a chief of the same name resided. He had formerly visited the mission station at the Kuruman. There he was addressed most faithfully upon his condition as a sinner, but he seemed to give no heed to it. "After some time," says Mr. Moffat, "he repeated his visit to our station, bringing with him a large retinue, which included his brother, their wives, and other relations. The journey occupied about five days on ox-back. Nothing could equal our surprise, when we discovered that he was not far from the kingdom of God, and that he was striving, or rather agonizing, to enter. All the powers of his soul seemed overwhelmed with the contemplation of the love of God. He had only to open his lips, and his tears would flow; his experience was simple, and his affection ardent. When asked the cause of his sorrow, he said, 'When I first visited you I had only one heart, but now I have come with two. I cannot rest, my eyes will not slumber, because of the greatness of the things you told me on my first visit.' It was evident that an especial blessing had descended on the seed sown at that time, though

it was little more than the outlines of Christian doctrine. It also appeared, that during his solitary ride across the lonely plains, his mind became deeply interested in the subject. On his arrival among his own people, he not only began to teach them all he had heard, but he desired to affect their hearts; nor did he labour in vain. The efforts of this inquiring disciple were attended with a blessing. His brother, an intelligent man, had evidently derived benefit; while their wives, and others of his retinue, were so far interested in the subject, as to inquire, 'What shall we do to be saved?' Their knowledge was scanty, and their views very imperfect, but they believed in the Divine Being, and that he sent his Son into the world to save sinners. These truths were the spring of their emotions, and they thirsted and sighed for further instruction, and more light on subjects of which they possessed but the glimmering rays. Delightful was our task to pour into their souls the light of heaven, and direct them to the Lamb of God. Their deportment was serious and devout, their attendance on public and private instruction incessant and unwearied."

When at last they were obliged to go home,

they entreated Mr. Moffat to visit their distant village. And now the missionary comes to his door. The moment he enters the village, the cry is raised that he has come, and hundreds flock to see him. They crowd one upon another to shake his hand, and it was midnight before they would disperse and let the weary traveller lie down in his wagon to rest. He had but a short sleep ere the crowd assembled again, and before he could have time to eat, he must get up and preach. He says: "I confess I was more inclined to take a cup of coffee than to preach a sermon, for I still felt the fatigues of the preceding day. I took my Testament and a hymn-book, and with such singers as I had, gave out a hymn, read a chapter, and prayed; then taking the text, 'God so loved the world,' etc., discoursed to them for about an hour. Great order and profound silence were maintained. The scene was in the centre of the village, composed of Bechuana and Coranna houses, and cattle-folds. Some of these contained the cattle, sheep, and goats, while other herds were strolling about. At a distance a party were approaching riding on oxen. A few strangers drew near with

their spears and shields, who, on being beckoned to, instantly laid them down. The native dogs could not understand the strange looking being on the front of the wagon, holding forth to a gazing throng, and they would occasionally break the silence with their bark, for which, however, they suffered the penalty of a stone or stick hurled at their heads. Two milk-maids, who had tied their cows to posts, stood the whole time with their milking vessels in their hands, as if afraid of losing a single sentence. The earnest attention manifested exceeded any thing I had ever before witnessed, and the countenances of some indicated strong mental excitement.

“After service I walked to an adjoining pool in the bed of the river to refresh myself with a wash, hoping on my return to get something like a breakfast, but found, owing to some mistake, that the kettle was not boiling. The people were again assembling, and again requested me to preach. On begging half an hour for refreshment, the chief’s wife hobbled off to her house, and immediately returned with a large wooden vessel full of sour milk, saying, with a smile on her countenance,

‘There, drink away, drink much, and you will be able to speak long.’ Having cheerfully accepted this hasty African breakfast, I resumed my station, and preached a second time to, if possible, a still more attentive congregation. When I had concluded, my hearers divided into companies, to talk the subject over, but others, more inquisitive, plied me with questions. While thus engaged, my attention was arrested by a simple-looking young man at a short distance, rather oddly attired. He wore what was once a pair of trousers, with part of one leg still remaining. For a hat he had part of the skin of a zebra’s head, with the ears attached, and something not less fantastic about his neck. I had noticed this grotesque figure before, but such sights are by no means uncommon, as the natives will hang any thing about their bodies, either for dress or ornament, without the slightest regard to appearance. The person referred to was holding forth with great animation to a number of people, who were all attention. On approaching, I found, to my surprise, that he was preaching my sermon over again, with uncommon precision, and with great solemnity, imitating as nearly as

he could the gestures of the original. A greater contrast could scarcely be conceived than the fantastic figure I have described, and the solemnity of his language, his subject being eternity, while he evidently felt what he spoke. Not wishing to disturb him, I allowed him to finish the recital, and seeing him soon after, told him that he could do what I was sure I could not; that was, preach again the same sermon verbatim. He did not appear vain of his superior memory. 'When I hear any thing great,' he said, touching his forehead with his finger, 'it remains there.' This young man died in the faith shortly after, before an opportunity was afforded him of making a public profession.

"In the evening, after the cows were milked, and the herds had laid themselves down in the folds to chew the cud, a congregation, for the third time, stood before my wagon. The bright silvery moon, holding her way through a cloudless starry sky, and shining on many a sable face, made the scene peculiarly solemn and impressive, while the deepest attention was paid to the subject, which was the importance of religion illustrated by Scrip-



Moonlight in Africa.—Pages 27 & 28.



ture characters. After the service, they lingered about the wagon, making many inquiries, and repeating over and over again what they had heard. Mosheu very kindly presented a sheep the evening before for myself and people, and the wives took care that we should not want milk. It had been a day of incessant speaking, and at a late hour I was thankful to retire to rest with the hum of voices around the wagon."

The next day was spent in visiting the sick, in addressing the people, and in giving them some first lessons in reading. The desire to learn was so great, that Mr. Moffat was obliged to teach the alphabet to some of the chief men of the place. This scene, as he describes it, was very amusing.

"After a search, I found, among some waste paper, a large sheet alphabet, with a corner and two letters torn off. This was laid down on the ground, when all knelt in a circle round it, and of course the letters were viewed, by some, standing just upside down. I commenced pointing with a stick, and when I pronounced one letter, all hallooed out to some purpose. When I remarked that per-

haps we might manage with somewhat less noise, one replied, he was sure the louder he roared, the sooner would his tongue get accustomed to the 'seeds,' as he called the letters. As it was growing late, I rose to straighten my back, which was beginning to tire, when I observed some young folks coming dancing and skipping towards me, who, without any ceremony, seized hold of me. 'Oh, teach us the A B C with music,' every one cried, giving me no time to tell them it was too late. I found they had made this discovery through one of my boys. There were presently a dozen or more surrounding me, and resistance was out of the question. Dragged and pushed, I entered one of the largest native houses, which was instantly crowded. The tune of 'Auld lang syne' was pitched to A B C, each succeeding round was joined by succeeding voices till every tongue was vocal, and every countenance beamed with heartfelt satisfaction. The longer they sang the more freedom was felt, and Auld lang syne was echoed to the farthest corner of the village. The strains which infuse pleasurable emotions into the sons of the north, were no less potent among these chil-

dren of the south. Those who had retired to their evening's slumbers, supposing that we were holding a night service, came; 'for music,' it is said, 'charms the savage ear.' It certainly does, particularly the natives of Southern Africa; who, however degraded they may have become, still retain that refinement of taste, which enables them to appreciate those tunes which are distinguished for melody and softness. After two hour's singing and puffing, I obtained permission, though with some difficulty of consent, and greater of egress, to leave them, now comparatively proficient. It was between two and three in the morning. Worn out in body and mind, I lay myself down in my wagon, cap and shoes and all, just to have a few hours' sleep, preparatory to departure on the coming day. As the 'music hall' was not far from my pillow, there was little chance of sleeping soundly, for the young amateurs seemed unwearied, and A B C to Auld lang syne went on till I was ready to wish it at John-o'-Groat's house. The company at length dispersed, and awaking in the morning after a brief repose, I was not a little surprised to hear the old tune in every corner of the village. The

maids milking the cows, and the boys tending the calves, were humming their alphabet over again."

A mission was afterwards established at this village, and it has been greatly blessed of God. Perhaps a more wonderful example of the power of the gospel is not on record, than the mission at this place produced. A single incident will illustrate it.

"The congregation met one Sabbath morning to hold the early prayer-meeting before the services of the day. They were scarcely seated, when a party of marauders approached from the interior, whither they had gone for plunder, and not having succeeded to their wishes, had determined to attack this Coranna village on their return. Mosheu arose, and begged the people to sit still and trust in Jehovah, while he went to meet the marauders. To his inquiry, what they wanted, the appalling reply was, 'Your cattle; and it is at your peril you raise a weapon to resist.' 'There are my cattle,' replied the chief, and then retired and resumed his position at the prayer-meeting. A hymn was sung, a chapter read, and then all kneeled in prayer to God, who only could save them in their distresses. The sight was

too sacred and solemn to be gazed on by such a band of ruffians; they all withdrew from the spot, without touching a single article belonging to the people.”



CHAPTER XVI.

Glorious works of grace—The claims of Africa.

During the years 1837 and 1838, a rich blessing descended on the Bechuana mission, on all the stations, at every place where the gospel was read and preached. Large additions of Bechuanas to the church at Griqua Town have already been noticed; and in 1838 great accessions were made to that of the Kuruman. Under the superintendence of Mr. Edwards, the number of readers connected with the mission had increased in an equal ratio; while the Infant School, commenced and carried on by Mrs. Edwards, with the assistance of a native girl, gave the highest satisfaction. The people made rapid advances in civilization; some purchasing wagons, and breaking in their oxen for those labours which formerly devolved on the female

sex. The place of worship was so far in readiness that it was opened in November, 1838. This was a deeply interesting season to all, and especially to the missionaries and the church which had been gathered from among the heathen. Between eight and nine hundred entered those walls, now sacred to the service of Jehovah. A deep sense of the Divine presence was felt during the services on that memorable occasion. The Rev. P. Lemue, of Motito, took part with the resident missionaries in the solemnities. In the afternoon of the following Sabbath, one hundred and fifty members united in commemorating the dying love of Him who had redeemed them by his blood, and brought them, by his providence and grace, from tribes—some very distant—to participate in the heavenly banquet. Many, with eyes suffused with tears, compared their present happy condition with the ignorance and degradation from which they had been graciously delivered. The church has since increased to two hundred and thirty.

Mr. Edwards writes: "Mothibi, our old king, feeble from age, stood forth with others to make a public profession of his faith by

being baptized. He has for some time been reckoned among the dead; his people viewing him as one of the past generation. I had heard, a few months before he last visited us, that he was becoming much concerned about the state of his soul, and could no longer conceal his fears, which only increased the longer he kept silent. Being quite overwhelmed, he made known his alarm to the believers, and requested their counsel and sympathy. Morisanyane, the native reader at his residence, was made useful to him. Mothibi at length urgently entreated his sons 'to take him to Kuruman to see his own missionaries.' Immediately on his arrival, he bent his feeble steps to the mission-house. Never before, I believe, did he visit a missionary with so much anxiety and diffidence. I found him not inclined to speak much, but rather to hear what might be said to him. He said, however, in substance, that 'he had come to speak about his soul—that he was an old man, great from age, but without understanding. There is nothing left,' he exclaimed, 'but my old bones and withered skin. I heard 'the word' from the beginning, (twenty-five years ago,) but never understood, and now have no rest

night nor day; my soul is sorrowful and burning with anguish; my heart is sick, and rises into my throat; my mind is dark, and my memory cannot retain the good word; but though it forsakes me, it does me good; it leaves something behind in my soul, which I cannot explain, but which causes me to hope. I wish to cast myself at the feet of Jesus, the Son of God, in hope and expectation that he will have mercy on me. I feel that it will be my wisdom to sit at the feet of believers who are grown to manhood in knowledge, to be ever instructed by them in the paths of duty and salvation.

“On inquiring among those who had observed him of late, I found that they all thought favourably of him, for they had seen him weep repeatedly over his sins, and his lost state as a sinner. He expressed ardent desires to live and die at the feet of Christ, and to be united to his people; and there being no scriptural objection, he was proposed and received by the church in this place. Though the rightful chief of 20,000 Bechuanas, Mothibi stood forth with as much humility as others of his people beside him, whom he formerly considered as his ‘servants’ or

‘dogs,’ to receive the ordinance of baptism. He may not be a bright star among the believers, but if enabled to follow up his desire ‘to live and die at the feet of Jesus,’ though he go halting the few remaining days of his life, he will be at last received to glory, a monument of what grace can do even at the eleventh hour.”

In reference to this pleasing event, Mr. Hamilton remarks: “Things are now coming to close quarters. The surrounding heathen chiefs are in a state of consternation, at the father of their cause embracing the faith, and becoming a little child in the kingdom of God; and on being assured that this is really the case, shake their heads as mournfully as if he were dead.”

Other missionaries have entered this wide and most unpromising field. The Wesleyan Society, the Church Missionary Society and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions have sent labourers into South Africa, and the Lord has been with them. There is no part of the world where a darker night of moral death hangs over the land, and if those who *need* the gospel the most should have it first, these Africans should have it without delay. If the tribes

which still survive the devastations to which they have been exposed, are to be saved from annihilation, it must be by the diffusion of the gospel. It is omnipotent; and if we had only a tithe of the money which is expended in defence against incursions of barbarous nations, we could adopt those means which, under the promised blessing of Him who holdeth the reins of universal sway, and who willeth that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved, would bring them under the reign of the Prince of Peace. And melancholy as is the past history of Africa, we are fully warranted to anticipate that the warlike and savage tribes of that immense continent will ere long present a scene, in the intelligence, holiness, and happiness of its regenerated nations, which will far exceed the most sanguine expectations of those who have laboured, and are still labouring, in behalf of her afflicted children. If we bring within the mind's view the history of that vast portion of our earth, can we refrain from exclaiming, O Africa! how vast, how overwhelming thy burden! How numberless thy wrongs—the prey of fiendish men—the world's great mart of rapine, bondage, blood,

and murder! On no part of the earth's surface, in no state or condition of mankind, can we find a parallel to thy woes! Thy skies have been obscured with smoke of towns in flames!—thy lovely landscapes and sunny groves transformed to lions' dens!—thy burning deserts bedewed with the agonizing tears of bereaved mothers!—and thy winds have re-echoed back to thy blood-stained soil the orphan's cry, the widow's wail!"

Who does not long and pray for the time when Ethiopia will stretch forth her hands unto God? This subject has occupied the attention of the noblest minds; and the excellent of the earth are generally agreed that, in order to civilize, we must evangelize Africa. Nothing can be more to the point than the following extract from the valuable work on the Slave Trade and its Remedy, by Sir T. F. Buxton.

“Africa still lies in her blood. She wants our missionaries, our schoolmasters, our Bibles—all the machinery we possess, for ameliorating her wretched condition. Shall we, with a remedy that may safely be applied, neglect to heal her wounds? Shall we, on whom the

lamp of life shines, refuse to disperse her darkness?

“If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies; we must awake to the duty, amidst every difficulty, of freely and liberally distributing to others those rich and abundant blessings which have been intrusted to us.

“Missionaries find less difficulty than any other class of persons, perhaps, in winning the confidence of the native tribes. The secret of their success is the spirit of fair dealing, and the manifestation of upright and benevolent intentions which they carry with them. These speak to all men, but especially to the uncivilized, in a language which they accurately comprehend, and to which they freely respond.”

These principles speak for themselves, and they ought to speak; for the destinies of unborn millions, as well as the millions who now exist, are at stake. To rescue Africa from the abyss of misery in which she has been plunged, as the same able advocate writes, “Let missionaries and schoolmasters, the plough and the spade, go together, and

agriculture will flourish, the avenues of legitimate commerce will be opened, confidence between man and man will be inspired, whilst civilization will advance as the natural effect, and Christianity operate as the proximate cause of the happy change."

The preceding chapters show what has been accomplished among the tribes in the southern portions of this vast continent. What now remains to be done, but to go up and take possession of the land? The means have been described, and our prospects are inviting; avenues have been opened up; translations of the word of God have been made into different languages; a native agency is in operation. Many of the sons of Africa, born and brought up in Christian lands, are now ready to go and proclaim the liberty of the gospel to their captive brethren. We are warranted to expect, from what has already occurred, great and glorious results, as the consequence of the simple distribution of scriptural truth, and the influence of that truth in connection with native agency. When only the Gospel of Luke was printed in the language, and the first edition of Scripture lessons had been put into the hands of the

natives, Mr. Hughes, writing from an out-station, made the following striking remarks :—

“The good work here is making progress. What has been accomplished by feeble means (in our eyes) makes me exclaim, ‘What hath God wrought?’ The sword of the Spirit is truly in unskilled hands, but it hath shown itself two-edged. Its success here is evidently not owing to the hand that wields it, but to its own native power and destination from above. Jesus and the apostles teach here without any human infirmity intruding between them and the hearts of the hearer. The great principles of the Bible Society are exemplified here,—the simple reading and study of the Bible alone will convert the world. The missionary’s work is to gain for it admission and attention, and then let it speak for itself. The simplicity of means in connection with the greatness of the effect, is quite in character with its Divine Author. To Him be all the praise.”

The vast importance of having the Scriptures in the language of the natives, will be seen when we look on the scattered towns and hamlets which stud the interior, over which one language, with slight variations, is spoken

as far as the equator. When taught to read, they have in their hands the means not only of recovery from their natural darkness, but of keeping the lamp of life burning amidst a desert gloom. "In one of my early journeys," says Mr. Moffat, "with some of my companions, we came to a heathen village on the banks of the Orange river, between Namaqualand and the Griqua country. We had travelled far, and were hungry, thirsty, and fatigued. From the fear of being exposed to lions, we preferred remaining at the village to proceeding during the night.

"The people at the village rather roughly directed us to halt at a distance. We asked water, but they would not supply it. I offered the three or four buttons which still remained on my jacket for a little milk; this also was refused. We had the prospect of another hungry night at a distance from water, though within sight of the river. We found it difficult to reconcile ourselves to our lot, for in addition to repeated rebuffs, the manner of the villagers excited suspicion. When twilight drew on, a woman approached from the height beyond which the village lay. She bore on her head a bundle of wood, and had a vessel

of milk in her hand. The latter, without opening her lips, she handed to us, laid down the wood, and returned to the village. A second time she approached with a cooking vessel on her head, and a leg of mutton in one hand, and water in the other. She sat down without saying a word, prepared the fire, and put on the meat. We asked her again and again who she was. She remained silent till affectionately entreated to give us a reason for such unlooked-for kindness to strangers. The solitary tear stole down her sable cheek, when she replied, 'I love Him whose servant you are, and surely it is my duty to give you a cup of cold water in his name. My heart is full, therefore I cannot speak the joy I feel to see you in this out-of-the-world place.' On learning a little of her history, and that she was a solitary light burning in a dark place, I asked her how she kept up the life of God in her soul in the entire absence of the communion of saints. She drew from her bosom a copy of the Dutch New Testament, which she had received from Mr. Helm when in his school some years previous, before she had been compelled by her connections to retire to her present seclusion.

‘This,’ she said, ‘is the fountain whence I drink; this is the oil which makes my lamp burn.’ I looked on the precious relic, printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the reader may conceive how I felt, and my believing companions with me, when we met with this disciple, and mingled our sympathies and prayers together at the throne of our heavenly Father. **GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TO MEN !”**

