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LECTURE I.

Delivered before the University of Cambridge, in the Senate-House, on Friday, 4th December, 1857. Dr Philpott, Master of St Catharine's College, Vice-Chancellor, in the chair. The building was crowded to excess with all ranks of the University and their friends. The reception was so enthusiastic that literally there were volley after volley of cheers. The Vice-Chancellor introduced Dr Livingstone to the meeting, who spoke nearly as follows:—

When I went to Africa about seventeen years ago I resolved to acquire an accurate knowledge of the native tongues; and as I continued, while there, to speak generally in the African languages, the result is that I am not now very fluent in my own; but if you will excuse my imperfections under that head, I will endeavour to give you as clear an idea of Africa as I can. If you look at the map of Africa you will discover the shortness of the coast-line, which is in consequence of the absence of deep indentations of the sea. This is one reason why the interior of Africa has remained so long unknown to the rest of the world. Another reason is the unhealthiness of the coast, which seems to have reacted upon the disposition of the people, for they are very unkindly, and opposed to

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Europeans passing through their country. In the southern part of Africa lies the great Kalahari desert[1], not so called as being a mere sandy plain, devoid of vegetation: such a desert I never saw until I got between Suez and Cairo. Kalahari is called a desert because it contains no streams, and water is obtained only from deep wells. The reason why so little rain falls on this extensive plain, is, because the winds prevailing over the greater part of the interior country are easterly, with a little southing. The moisture taken up by the atmosphere from the Indian Ocean is deposited on the eastern hilly slope; and when the moving mass of air reaches its greatest elevation, it is then on the verge of the great valley, or, as in the case of the Kalahari, the great heated inland plains there meeting with the rarefied air of that hot, dry surface, the ascending heat gives it greater capacity for retaining all its remaining humidity, and few showers can be given to the middle and western lands in consequence of the increased hygrometric power. (See *Travels*, p. 95.) The people living there, not knowing the physical reasons why they have so little rain, are in the habit of sending to the mountains on the east for rain-makers, in whose power of making rain they have a firm belief[2]. They say the

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[1] For an account of this desert, see Appendix, page 64.

[2] Rain-makers are a numerous race in Southern Africa; and rain-making is an inveterate prejudice in the minds of large numbers of people. At pages 20—25 of the book of *Travels* is given an amusing, yet pathetic, account of this quackery among the Bakwains. These people try to help themselves to rain by a variety of preparations, such as char-

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people in those mountains have plenty of rain, and therefore must possess a medicine for making it. This faith in rain-making is a remarkable feature in the people in the country, and they have a good deal to say in favour of it. If you say you do not believe that these medicines have any power upon the clouds, they reply that that is just the way people talk about what they do not understand. They take a bulb, pound it, and administer an infusion of it to a sheep: in a short time the sheep dies in convulsions, and then they ask, Has not the medicine power? I do not think our friends of the homœopathic "persuasion" have much more to say than that. The common argument known to all those tribes is this—"God loves you white men better than us: He made you first, and did not make us pretty like you: He made us afterwards, and does not love us as He loves you. He gave you clothing, and horses and waggons, and guns and powder, and that Book, which you are always talking

coal made of burnt bats, jackals' livers, baboons' and lions' hearts, serpents' skins and *vertebræ,* in addition to the means mentioned above. They take a philosophical view of the question, and say that they do not pretend to make the rain themselves, but that God Himself makes it in answer to their prayers, and as a consequence of their preparations. They pray by means of their medicines, which act makes the rain theirs. A practice somewhat similar exists among the medicine men of the North-American Indians. It is somewhat striking that the Bakwains were so long afflicted with drought during Dr Livingstone's residence among them. They attributed this partly to his wizard powers, and partly to the presence of the Bible; regarding him with a suspicion corresponding with this belief. The dialogue between the medical doctor and the rain-doctor is highly entertaining, and shews great acuteness on the part of the untutored savage.

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about. He gave us only two things—cattle and a knowledge of certain medicines by which we can make rain. We do not despise the things that you have; we only wish that we had them too; we do not despise that Book of yours, although we do not understand it: so you ought not to despise our knowledge of rain-making, although you do not understand it." You cannot convince them that they have no power to make rain. As it is with the homœopathist, so it is with the rain-maker—you might argue your tongue out of joint, and would convince neither.

I went into that country for the purpose of teaching the doctrines of our holy religion, and settled with the tribes on the border of the Kalahari desert. These tribes were those of the Bakwains, Bushmen and Bakalahari. Sechele[1] is the chief of the former. On

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[1] This interesting man is the son of the Bakwain Chief, Mochoasele. He was uniformly kind to the Livingstones, sending them food constantly during their stay with him at Shokuane, his place of residence, and becoming our traveller's guide in 1850, when going to visit Sebituane. As a child his life was spared by Sebituane when attacking the Bakwains, who gave him his father's chieftainship. He married the daughters of three of his under-chiefs, and afterwards became Dr Livingstone's Sergius Paulus, or first influential Christian convert. He had family prayers in his house, and became a missionary to his own people, sending his children to Mr Moffat, at Kuruman, to be instructed "in all the knowledge of the white man." He learnt to read with great diligence, and succeeded well, getting quite fat through becoming a student instead of a hunter. The Bible was his constant study, he being particularly fond of Isaiah's book of prophecy. Once he said, in reference to St Paul, "He was a fine fellow, that Paul."

The Boers hate him for his resolute independence, and love of the

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the occasion of the first religious service held, he asked me if he could put some questions on the subject of Christianity, since such was the custom of their country when any new subject was introduced to their notice. I said, "By all means." He then inquired "If my forefathers knew of a future judgment?" I said, "Yes;" and began to describe the scene of the great white throne, and HIM who should sit on it, from whose face the heavens shall flee away, and be no more seen; interrupting he said, "You startle me, these words make all my bones to shake, I have no more strength in me. You have been talking about a future judgment, and many terrible things, of which we know nothing," repeating, "Did your forefathers know of these things?" I again replied in the affirmative. The chief said, "All my forefathers have passed away into darkness, without knowing anything of what was to befall them; how is it that your forefathers, knowing all these things, did not send word to my forefathers sooner?" This was rather a poser; but I explained the geographical difficulties, and said it was only after we had begun to send the knowledge of Christ to Cape Colony and other parts of the country, to which we had access, that we came to them; that it was their duty to receive what Europeans had now obtained the power to offer them; and that the time would come when the whole world would receive the knowledge of Christ,

English. He values everything European, and desires to trade with white men. Some further details are found in the Lectures about him.

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because Christ had promised that all the earth should be covered with a knowledge of Himself. The chief pointed to the Kalahari desert, and said, "Will you ever get beyond that with your Gospel? We, who are more accustomed to thirst than you are, cannot cross that desert; how can you?" I stated my belief in the promise of Christ; and in a few years afterwards that chief was the man who enabled me to cross that desert; and not only so, but he himself preached the Gospel to tribes beyond it. In some years, more rain than usual falls in the desert, and then there is a large crop of water-melons. When this occurred, the desert might be crossed: in 1852, a gentleman crossed it, and his oxen existed on the fluid contained in the melons for twenty-two days. In crossing the desert, different sorts of country are met with; up to 20th south latitude, there is a comparatively dry and arid country, and you might travel for four days, as I have done, without a single drop of water for the oxen. Water for the travellers themselves was always carried in the waggons, the usual mode of travelling south of the 20th degree of latitude being by ox-waggon. For four days, upon several occasions, we had not a drop of water for the oxen; but beyond 20th south latitude, going to the north, we travelled to Loanda, 1,500 miles, without carrying water for a single day. The country in the southern part of Africa is a kind of oblong basin, stretching north and south, bounded on all sides by old schist rocks. The waters of this central basin find an exit through

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a fissure into the river Zambesi, flowing to the east, the basin itself being covered with a layer of calcareous tufa.

My object in going into the country south of the desert was to instruct the natives in a knowledge of Christianity, but many circumstances prevented my living amongst them more than seven years, amongst which were considerations arising out of the slave system carried on by the Dutch Boers. I resolved to go into the country beyond, and soon found that, for the purposes of commerce, it was necessary to have a path to the sea. I might have gone on instructing the natives in religion, but as civilization and Christianity must go on together, I was obliged to find a path to the sea, in order that I should not sink to the level of the natives[1]. The chief[2] was

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[1] After leaving Lake Ngami, Dr Livingstone took his family back to the Cape, and then set out on his first great journey. He visited Sebituane, at whose death he recommenced his exploring labours. During the course of these, he floundered through the marshy country south of Linyanti, and came so unexpectedly upon Secheletu, that the people said "he dropped from the clouds, riding on a hippopotamus."

[2] This is Secheletu, chief of the Makololo, being the son of Sebituane. When Dr Livingstone first knew him he was eighteen years old, being of a coffee and milk colour. He became chief through the resignation and at the desire of his sister, Mamochisáne, whom Sebituane, at his death, had appointed to govern. Secheletu had a rival, 'Mpepe, who, while alive, rendered his position somewhat insecure. This 'Mpepe attempted to assassinate him as he was escorting our traveller to explore the river Chobe, and visiting his possessions. Dr Livingstone unintentionally prevented this design by stepping between them just as the murderer was about to strike the chief down.

Secheletu behaved so generously towards Dr Livingstone, at all times and in so many ways, that the civilized world and Africa are deeply indebted to him for contributing so largely towards the opening of the interior of that vast continent. He found the escort of twenty-

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overjoyed at the suggestion, and furnished me with twenty-seven men, and canoes, and provisions, and presents for the tribes through whose country we had to pass. We might have taken a shorter path to the sea than that to the north, and then to the west, by which we went; but along the country by the shorter route, there is an insect called the tsetse[1], whose bite is fatal to horses, oxen, and dogs, but not to men or donkeys.—You seem to think there is a connexion between the two.—The habitat of that insect is along the shorter route to the sea. The bite of it is fatal to domestic animals, not immediately, but certainly in the course of two or three months; the animal grows leaner and leaner,

seven men, as here mentioned, for the first, and that of one hundred and fourteen men for the second, great journey; also, ten tusks of ivory to help to defray the costs of the former, and thirty for the latter.

He is a man of enlightened mind, and a peace-maker. When our traveller set out from Linyanti on his journey towards the Barotse country, he accompanied him with one hundred and sixty attendants. During this journey they ate together, dwelt in the same tent, and returned to Linyanti after a nine weeks' tour. When Dr Livingstone and his party set out for Loanda, he lent his own canoes, and sent orders for their maintenance wherever they came in his dominions, and gave them a most touching and spirit-stirring reception on their return to Linyanti. On this occasion the presents received, story told, and greetings given, were of a most satisfactory character.

To shew the eagerness of Secheletu to trade with the white man, he immediately dispatched another party to Loanda, who arrived safely there after our traveller's arrival in England. To the latter he gave all the ivory in his country, and asked him to bring from England, as well as a sugar-mill, "any beautiful thing you may see in your own country." He eagerly and confidently awaits our traveller's promised return.

[1] For an account of the *tsetse*, see Appendix, p. 81.

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and gradually dies of emaciation: a horse belonging to Gordon Cumming died of a bite five or six months after it was bitten.

On account of this insect, I resolved to go to the north, and then westwards to the Portuguese settlement of Loanda. Along the course of the river which we passed, game was so abundant that there was no difficulty in supplying the wants of my whole party: antelopes were so tame that they might be shot from the canoe. But beyond 14 degrees of south latitude the natives had guns, and had themselves destroyed the game, so that I and my party had to live on charity. The people, however, in that central region were friendly and hospitable: but they had nothing but vegetable productions: the most abundant was the cassava, which, however nice when made into tapioca pudding, resembles in its more primitive condition nothing so much as a mess of laundress' starch[1]. There was a desire in the various villages through which we passed to have intercourse with us, and kindness and hospitality were shewn us; but when we got near the Portuguese settlement of Angola the case was changed, and payment was demanded for every thing[2]. But I had nothing to pay with. Now the people had been in the habit of trading with the

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[1] For an account of this, see Appendix, p. 79.

[2] This was often a sort of black-mail levied for a right of way, and was generally demanded in the shape of "a man, a tusk, an ox, or a gun."

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slavers, and so they said I might give one of my men in payment for what I wanted. When I shewed them that I could not do this, they looked upon me as an interloper, and I was sometimes in danger of being murdered.

As we neared the coast, the name of England was recognized, and we got on with ease. Upon one occasion, when I was passing through the parts visited by slave-traders, a chief[1] who wished to shew me some kindness offered me a slave-girl: upon explaining that I had a little girl of my own, whom I should not like my own chief to give to a black man, the chief thought I was displeased with the size of the girl, and sent me one a head taller. By this and other means I convinced my men of my opposition to the principle of slavery; and when we arrived at Loanda I took them on board a British vessel, where I took a pride in shewing them that those countrymen of mine and those guns were there for the purpose of putting down the slave-trade. They were convinced from what they saw of the honesty of Englishmen's intentions; and the hearty reception they met with

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[1] This was Shinte, or Kabombo, a Balonda chief. He gave our traveller a grand reception, and treated him kindly. The kidnapping of children and others by night, to sell for slaves, was an unhappy practice of his.

Dr Livingstone mentions five other Balonda chiefs, with four of whom he had intercourse. Matiamvo, the paramount chief of all the Balonda tribes, he did not visit, as he resides too far away to the North. Those whom he saw were Manenko and Nyamoana, two female chiefs; also Masiko and Kawawa, two other chieftains. Interesting notices of these are scattered through the book, especially of Shinte and Manenko, who are related as uncle and niece.