DRH/ANB

Answer to missionaries query a Objection owing to mhygenic conditions a brillingo.

S.K.23/6/24/407

Sekukuniland 19th April 1926. P.O.Secocoenie. Tvl.

Secretary for Mative Affairs.

P.O. Box 384.

Pretoria.

Circumcision Schools.

With reference to Identical Minute N.A.20/366 of the 9th instant the following are the particulars in regard to Sekukuniland:-

(I) Circumcision Schools are prevalent throughout the whole District. They are held when the crops are good or even fair, but not in years of drought or calamity such as when the cattle were shot for Sast Coast Fever, or at such a time as the Influenza of I918. Last year there were schools everywhere; most of the boys' schools finished last August and the girls' schools (which go out on the same day that the boys finish) have in several cases only been completed this April.

There is no dimination in the general prevalence of the schools.

(2) It is said that in very ancient days the circumcising was done with a sharp flint stone. Later this gave place to a piece of sharpened iron.

Nowadays the operation is done with a knife which the headman keeps specially for that purpose and it is never used for anything else.

The youths are operated upon alongside a running river or mountain stream. Each one is done separately out of the sight of the others and the operators' hands and the knife have to be cleaned in the stream after each individual operation. I only know of one instance in which the above practice is not carried out in Sekukuniland, owing to lack of water at that centre: there the operator cleans his knife after each operation by passing it through a grass broom containing certain medicines but I do not know the medicines.

denerally speaking the methods are not unhygenic and the operation is as clean as untutored natives can make it, though a modern doctor would doubtless advocate sterilizing the knife every time to make sure and avoid all danger, especially in the case of a possible syphilitic.

I have made a study of these Schools and have questioned many natives who have told me openly and freely about them. They say they cannot recollect any boy dying of blood poisoning or bleeding to death, though I daresay out of several thousand operations there must be some such instances.

Nowadays after the operation a youth is not made to go out hunting so long as his wound is not healed,

(3) The practice of taking life for breaking a tribal

saboo exists mainly in the memory of old natives and in the imagination of some Evangelists and others who are opposed to the Schools.

In the old days when the "mediti" or watchers were fewer and the schools larger and harder a youngster might attempt to commit the worst possible offence, that of running away from the school, in which case he used certainly to be killed. Nowadays the mediti are more numerous, the schools are more spread out among the headmen and therefore smaller and in any case fear of the consequences prevents the taking of life. A truent nowadays is certainly recaptured and brought back to the school, but he is thereafter kept separate from the others. I personally know of a boy named Edgar Ngake who ran away from Chief Pasha Nkoane's school and was recaptured, he is very much alive today.

Formerly a youth might be killed if he went out by the entrance to the sleeping place instead of by the exit. Nowadays the mediti take better precautions to prevent this "crime" and in ay case the youth would not be killed.

In the old days they would kill a girl who spied on the school but old Sekukuni stopped this practice long ago. Such a girl is now taken to the Chief who makes her parents pay a heavy fine privately.

Killing may be said to have ceased in the Sekukuniland schools years before 1899, as these natives were afraid of it coming to the ears of the Republican Government who kept a close watch on the Bapedi of Sekukumi.

Some weak or sick natives die during the school period and their deaths are kept a secret till the end of the school. Perhaps this practice may raise some suspicion in the eyes of friends who had known the youth wan before he entered the school.

Every headman in Sekukuniland, certainly since I came here (18 years ago) comes to office and asks permission to open a school. I have met schools hunting and have turned out many schools to come hunting with me. They do not look upon me as a stranger to avoid. It the close of a school those near Schooncord come in a body naked and smeared with fat and paint to the office to be assessed for tax.

The Bakoni in this District used to make their Bodikane and Boguera phases continuous while the Bapedi used to spearate the phases by a year or even two years. Nowadays owing to the difficulty of collecting the school again (as after its dispersal its members may have been kpt at work on contract in Johannesburg or elsewhere; the Bapedi are adopting the old Bakoni custom of joining the two phases consecutively, making it thus after longer and therefore perhaps a harder strain than was the case a few years ago.

In old times the Bodikane used to be six months. now it is about three and the Boguera is two months.

The circumcision school is still charished as the most sacred event in the life of a man, and in these days of loosened tribal morale it is the one period of discipline they undergo and respect.

> SUB-MATIVE COLDLISSIONER, SKKUKUNIL ND.

Circumcision Schools

Answer to missinaries quem 2 Directions owing to unhaginic enditions & Hillings - 1926

Reference Laborational Minute N.A. 20/366 of April 9th the poloning are the particulars in regard to Schukumiland: -

(1) Circumaisin Schools are prevalent throughoute the District. They are held when the crops are good or went fair, but hot in years of drought on destruction such as Case Coase to the English of the Lingthenge of 1918. Last year there were schools werywhere:

Most of the longs' schools prinched Last Aregust.

I the girls' schools (which go out on the same day that the longs princh) have in several cases only bun completed this April.

There is no diminution in the general prevalues

(2) The very ancient days It is said that the circumcisting was done with a sharp fluir stone.

If halin this your place a piece of specially sharpened iron.

The Morradays the Speciation is done with a bringe which the Head of the standard with the standard of the special standard the standard of the

Morradays the Spiration is done with a knife which the Headman heeps specially for that purpose it is now used for anything clase.

The goultes are spended whom alongside a punning price or sto mountain stream. Each one is done separately out of sight of the others & the spendon's hands the brings have to cleaned in the stream after each individual spender. I only know of one vistance in which the above practice is not carried in shutwing to Lach of water as that cute: love one; the

but there the spendon cleans his knife ofthe each spendion by passing it through a grass broom containing culaine

medicines how I do not know the medicines. " Yumally speaking the meltrodo are not unhugenis I the pe quation is as clean as untulored nativis advocate sterilizing the knife every time to make sure a avoid all danger, especially in the case of a possible syphilities. Thave made a study of these Schools & have questioned many natives who have told me Spring a freely about them. They say they cannot redless any boy dying of bood poisoning on bleeding to death, though I dansay our of sweet thousand operations there must be some such instances. Nowadays after the Spiration a youth is not made to go our hunting so long as his wound is wit healed. (3) The practice of taking life for breaking a tribal Labor exists mainly in the memory of old nativis s in the imagination of some Evangelists & others who are opposed Detre Schools. In the old days when the medite or watchers were fewer & the schools larger & harder a youngston might altempt to commit the worst possible offence, that of running away from the school, in which case he used cutainly to be hilled. Nowadays the medite are more humerous, the pelids are more spread our among the Headmen & therefore prevents the taking of life. A trumb nowadays is cutainly recaptured a brought back to sehol har he is thereoften hepe- separate from the others. I pursonally know of a box hamed Edgar Neahe who ran away from their Pasha Mroam's school

this proetice how ago. Inch a girl is har taken privately. May be said Braw ceased in the Sitherhuniland selvole year before 1899 as there Republican Government who hips: a close watch I was recapting, he is very much aline today. Formuly a youth might to billed if he were one by the whome to the pluping place instead of by the exist. Moradoup the mediti take letter the yorth unde up to hilled. It have hill a girl who spied on the petros his one Schutumi stipped presentions to present the "cime" & his same case

telest purise when deather are hepe a secure Sum Headman in Schuthmiland, cultainly since Headman hu (18 years, comes to Office & asho punicaión to open a selvor. I have mu pedodo hunting & have turned one- many pethols to come hunting with me. My do we toke you me as a those or selver those me selver those me selver those me selver those me selver to a look, habed a selver to anione with for a point. Is the office of by a year on eur him years. Howaday, owing The Robusi in this District - was to make their Bodihame a Boguera phases continuous while the Bapuse to phase the phase haire some suspicion in the eye of friends who had known the youth before he entired the section. Some week or sick rations die during the on the Beyweli of Schuthumi. arressur for l'an.

After difficulty of collecting the school again (as after its dispural its members may have been helper at work on contract in Johnsmuthy or elsewhere) the Bapedi are adopting the Rd Bakoni custom of joining the two phases consecutively, making is thus longer a thrusper pulsaps a harder strain than was the case a few years ago.

the case a few years ago. In Not times the Boditione used Dre sine months, now it is about three & the Boguera

is two months.

The Circumaisroin School is still churished as the most-sacred event in the life of a man, I in these days of loosened tribal morale it is the one puriod of discipline they undergo I pespect.

3.9. H





Collection no: A1655

Collection: HUNT, Donald Papers

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand
Location:- Johannesburg
@2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.