

Bechuanaland. The Governor of Cape Colony was made also the governor of British Bechuanaland, and an Administrator was appointed to take charge of its affairs. This post was given to Judge Sidney Shippard, who arrived at Vryburg, the seat of Government on the 23rd October 1865. The new province was divided into three magisterial districts, - Vryburg under Abraham F Robertson, Mafeking under James E Symon, and Taung under the Rev John S. Moffat. The laws of Cape Colony were made applicable to the new province. With these arrangements, the Bechwana people, that is the Barolong at Mafeking, and the Bathaping of Taung, were perfectly satisfied.

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 1895
 On the 11th November, a proclamation was issued, annexing it to Cape Colony. The designation 'Bechuanaland Protectorate' was now reserved for the territories between the Molopo River and Ramatlabama Spruit in the south and the 22nd degree of South latitude in the north, countries over which ruled Gaseitsiwe, Sechele, Lencwe and Shama in that order northwards. John Smith Moffat, the son of the venerable Dr Robert Moffat, was appointed Assistant Commissioner for these territories in 1887.

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While still in South Africa, Sir Charles Warren had impressed upon Her Majesty's Government the urgency of the land question in Bechuanaland, and accordingly, soon after his departure, a Land Court or Commission was appointed to go fully into the matter. It was mainly composed of the officers of the Royal Engineers who had been associated with and were recommended by Warren. The Commission commenced its duties towards the end of the year 1885 under the presidency of Sidney Shippard, the Administrator of Bechuanaland. The Secretary of State had ordered, in this connection that "no Barolong land should be given to satisfy Stellaland claims, and also that "the claims advanced by persons who had taken part in a freebooting attack upon the Protectorate (i.e. Montshiwa's country) were not to be entertained."

At the end of 1885, the first buildings of what was to become the European township were erected at Mafeking. This was first done without reference to the Land Court, but when that body began its work

at Mafeking, where it sat on the 15th January ~~1885~~ ¹⁸⁸⁶ and on the 10th February 1886, and again from the 11th till the 21st of May, the act was not only allowed but actually defended by Sidney Shippard, although the new township was within three-quarters of a mile of the Barolong town, and itsa planting within such close proximity was was strenuously opposed by the Barolong chiefs, the ^{Westerly} missionaries, and some members of the Commission itself like Lieutenant A.E. Haynes, the secretary of the Commission, who resigned for this reason. It was pointed out to the Commission that, in any case, there was no pressing need for a European township at Mafeking for reasons either of trade or defence. Montshiwa was particularly displeased. He wished that the European township should be built at Rooigrond, ten miles south-east of Mafeking. He feared that his people might become demoralised by close contact with all ~~the~~ classes of Europeans, he also feared that his powers as chief might be interfered with, and that encroachment upon his territory, and expropriation of some of his lands might eventually follow, and indeed a large tract of Barolong land was ^{soon after} appropriated for the European township and town commonage on the east. Montshiwa wrote a letter of protest to Her Majesty's ^{In Nov 1885 Sir Hercules Robinson came to the area and also approved the plot of town} Government on the 13th March, but received no satisfaction. The Secretary

of State remarked rightly that it was then too late to consider the propriety of removing the European township. ^{In May 1886 the Commission appointed the Resurveyor to make a plan of the holding and see what he had to say to the natives. He did not do so until after the protest had been made. He also reported that the natives had been told that the land was to be given to the Europeans.}

The Land Commission allotted the Barolong 660 square miles of territory on the Molopo River, the so-called Molopo Reserve. The balance of the ~~land~~ land was divided ~~into~~ into farms, most of which were given to deserving European claimants. Some were granted to members of the Bechuanaland police.

The Commission saw fit to refuse to grant individual titles to holdings which some Barolong of Montshiwa had occupied for a long ~~xxxx~~ period, and greatly improved, even though it was urged upon the Commission that such holdings would be themselves just as inalienable as the reserve in which they were. Nevertheless, the Commission made a strong recommendation that individual ownership should be kept in view, "so that at the earliest practicable period the native custom should be superseded by the better system of holding under individual right and by separate title-deed."

^{which} they recommended that 'Native Reserves' should belong to 'natives in perpetuity, be inalienable and distinct from 'Crown Reserves' or 'Government lands' from which 'natives' could be removed at any time to suit the Government.

found their way to Pitsana. On the 29th October, Jameson made arrangements with Chief Montshiwa and Silas Molema for the establishment of a police camp on the farm "Mabete" belonging to Silas Molema, being one of the farms in a block of territory known as Barolong Farms. On this farm, Pitsana Siding stands, while a hillock in it, which Dr Jameson pitched his camp is now known as "Jameson's Kopje." To make sure of an undisturbed occupation, Jameson asked to lease the farm, offered to give another one in exchange, and to cut matters short, he, without asking terms or conditions paid Silas Molema £300 as advance rent for an indefinite period. Before and after these negotiations, intensive military exercise and preparations were carried on with unremitting activity for the invasion of the Transvaal to support the Uitlander conspirators, (National Union), and ~~to~~ to obtain for them by force what they could not obtain by diplomacy - the right to the franchise, - which the Volksraad consistently denied the Uitlanders. The germ of the idea originated with the hierarchy. On Sunday the 29th December 1895 at the hour of sunset, the troops, after being harangued by Dr Jameson suddenly left Mabete, and ~~in~~ violated the Transvaal. 500 men, mounted and fully armed went forth under Jameson, impelled by a burning desire to help their brother Englishmen (Uitlanders, who were groaning under Kruger's heavy yoke, and clamouring for political equality, and fuming at the cruel injustice of taxation without representation, the everlasting bone of contention between the top dog and the under dog. Jameson and his force capitulated to Piet Cronje at Doornkop ~~in~~ near Krugersdorp, on the 2nd January 1896. He failed ignominiously and dragged himself, his friends - Rhodes and Rhodesia in the mud, threw suspicions of complicity upon Chamberlain and the Colonial Office, angered the Dutch, and added fresh fuel to the smouldering fire of racialism, and dealt a staggering blow to the ideal of 'United South Africa' so-called. He also dispelled thoroughly and finally any idea that might have been entertained, of handing the Protectorate to the Chartered Company. Although the Parliamentary Committee which sat in judgment over the ringleaders of the Raid in 1897 exonerated the Chartered Company, a cloud of suspicion hung over that corporate body for many years, and the confidence which the Colonial Office had reposed upon them gave place to mistrust.

In the mystic parlance of the Conspirators, "The Contractor, having refused to postpone the flotation or polo match, secured telegraph silence, stayed on the earthworks, and left for Johannesburg with some good horseflesh to the chairmen of the Chartered Company, and the humiliation of the.

Rinderpest

The surprise of the Jameson Raid had hardly died down when Bechuanaland was visited and swept by that highly contagious and fatal cattle plague - rinderpest. It flowed rather than crept down from Central Africa, invaded Rhodesia in February 1896, and ravished Bechuanaland and the Transvaal in April and May and on to the end of the year 1896. In spite of all measures taken to prevent its dissemination, it spread throughout the subcontinent, and mowed down some thing like 80 per cent of horned cattle. In Bechuanaland, carcasses of cattle were scattered throughout the country, the carrion birds had more than their fill, and a horrible stench permeated the air for several months.

Cattle constitute the pride and prop, bank and life of the Bechuanaland, and the administrative destruction of large herds of their stock with a view to controlling and limiting the disease was ~~intensely~~ bitterly opposed by many Bechwana people, and interpreted by the more ignorant or more original as a deliberate act, coolly calculated to impoverish them and ~~and~~ enslave them.

All roads seemed to lead to Rhodesia in the decade commencing 1890, and fortunes were to be made in several ways by men with any ~~an~~ spirit of enterprise. A young progressive community was Rhodesia, without railways and without harbours, and it wanted several things from Cape Colony in the south, merchandise, machinery, building material and provisions. Wagon transport became a lucrative, and a by no means despicable occupation. As had happened in Griqualand West after the discovery of diamonds in 1867, and as had been the case in the Transvaal after the ~~discovery~~ discovery of gold in 1885-6, many people of average means undertook wagon transport as a way of increasing their means. Among these were several members of the Barolong tribe of Mafeking, and some of them made thousands of pounds as transport contractors - carrying goods by ox wagons from Vryburg (1890 to 1895), and then from Mafeking (1895 to 1898) on the south, to Buluwayo, Salisbury, and other towns of Rhodesia in the north.

When the rinderpest broke out, it was a common ~~thing~~ thing to hear of, or see whole teams of oxen that pulled transport wagons being blotted out, and many transport contractors were stranded in the Bechuanaland Protectorate wilds, while several others were entirely

ruined. Mules and donkeys then came into demand to replace ~~the~~ oxen as draught animals, and it became common for an ordinary donkey to fetch £15 or more on the market, while mules were sold for £30 to £50 a piece.

Locusts had descended upon Bechuanaland in 1891, and again shortly before rinderpest in 1895, ^{and the Jameson raid 1896.} ~~Before~~ this / ~~xx~~ locusts had not been seen in the country since 1873, thus some twenty years had elapsed since the Bechuanaland had had a visitation from this pest, and locusts were quite unknown to fully grown adolescents and men. They now appeared in prodigious swarms that clouded the sky, and damaged the crops, and the advent of rinderpest so soon after the invasion of locusts brought the gaunt spectre of famine dangerously near the threshold of Becwana homes.

The Death of Montshiwa

The calamities cited above, namely locusts, rinderpest and the raid, were general in their effect; they were South African in their play. The Tshidi Barolong were soon called upon to face a domestic calamity in the death of their venerable old chief Montshiwa. He had been their ruler for close on fifty years. During all ~~this time~~ these years, he was at constant struggle with the Dutch Governments of the Transvaal under Andries Pretorius, Marthinus Wessels Pretorius, Francois Burgers, and Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger ~~respectively~~ consecutively. In his dealings with these men, administrative qualities of the highest order, anticipation, astuteness, courage and diplomacy. His successful defence of his country and his people against the ~~aggression~~ aggression and dread of the Transvaal for so many years, and his stubborn defiance against the commandants and presidents who persistently sought to impose their authority upon him, combined with his demonstrative partiality for the English and especially Imperial Government, led, as might well be expected, to his extreme unpopularity in the ~~Transvaal~~ Transvaal, where the most opprobrious epithets were always used in referring to him. W.E. Bok, State Secretary of Transvaal (188 - 188) called Montshiwa "the arch villain". George Theal the historian of South Africa, the ~~Boer~~ Boer Africander from Canada ~~says of him: "By the people of the Transvaal and the Orange~~ calls "the fountain of lies" and says of him: "By the people of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, he was ^{regarded} regarded, and not without reason, as utterly untrustworthy" and that he was detested in the Transvaal. On the other hand, all the British administrators and generals, who had dealings with Montshiwa, entertained a very high opinion of him. Sir ^{Sidney} ~~Sidney~~ Shippard spoke of him as a "brave, sturdy, and outspoken chief."

By his people, the Tshidi branch of the Barolong, Montshiwa was regarded as an inspired leader and law giver, a model Becwana chief, paternal, patriotic, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ wise, courageous and also uxorious. For forty years and ~~four~~ four, he had ~~xxxxxxx~~ Moses-like- led them through difficult and dangerous times, piloted them through ~~xxx~~ arid deserts, and commanded them against ferocious enemies. As a result of such of such successful leadership in adverse circumstances and external danger, Montshiwa was almost deified by his people, who had attained to a remarkable degree of tribal consciousness and solidarity. ~~ThaxShiafxkxmtshix~~ After a short illness, the Chief Montshiwa died on the night of the 19th October 1896. It was a night of horror and woe. Huge crowds of people rushed tumultuously to the royal place throughout the night and assembled in excited knots, groups and companies about the ~~great~~ great house. Women frantic with grief, gave way to their sorrow and kept up a ~~xx~~ wicrd wailing and loud lamentation. Strong men, unable to support the sense of their loss and of the national catastrophe, collapsed under the weight of their emotions. Children screamed wildly, either from fright, or from sympathy with their parents. Everything was calculated to impress the mind with eeriness and consternation. It was clear that the people felt the death of their chief poignantly. Montshiwa was 82 years old when he died. Though his physical strength had been gradually giving way, ~~xxx~~ his mind was alert, ~~and~~ his mental powers clear and clear almost to the end. Montshiwa never embraced or professed Christianity. At first, indeed, before and / soon after he became chief, he was bitterly opposed to it, and being ~~xxxx~~ much under the influence of his heathen maternal uncles of the Makgetla stock was almost induced to persecute the little band of Christians under his ~~xxxx~~ brother Molema, but the unselfish ~~ness and~~ devotion of the latter to Montshiwa personally, and to the Barolong interests in general overcame the chief, and made ~~him~~ him the chief supporter and sympathiser of the Christian work among the Barolong. When he was dying, he expressed a wish for repentance and baptism, and the Lord's supper. These sacraments were duly administered to the chief by the resident missionary, the Rev ~~R. F. Appeloe~~ *Alfred S. Sharp*.

Chief Montshiwa had been predeceased in 1891 by his ~~xxx~~ eldest son and heir Kebalepile, and in June 1895 by his able and many-sided states - secretary Israel Molema - the first Morolong, and in fact the first Mowana to receive school (literary) education. Israel was the eldest son of Chief Molema, and had inherited his father's qualities of organisation and leadership.

An apostle of hard work, he first taught the Barolong people the method of conservation of water by dams, and demonstrated farming by irrigation.

Montshiwa had had nine wives was a polygamist of the deepest dye, and on who often over-stepped the limits of traditional propriety in his matrimonial alliances, consanguinity seeming to be no bar to his annexations. He had had nine ^{ten} 'wives'. ^{Thus going ten better than his father Tawana} By his principal wife - Majang -, who was his half sister, he had a daughter - Buku, who later became one of the nine half-sisters, he had wives of Tshipinare, the forster son, heir and successor of Chief Moroka of Thaba Ncho fame. By his third wife - Mmasemela - daughter of Chief Chosa of the Ba-Ngwaketse, Montshiwa had had three sons namely Kebalepile, Besele and Tawana. Kebalepile and Tawana predeceased their father, and so Princess Buku having been offered the chieftainship and waived her right Besele was recognised as the rightful successor to Montshiwa, and was duly invested with a tiger skin and proclaimed supreme chief of the Tshidi Barolong in December 1896. The interesting thing about this investiture or enthronement is that it was the first one among the Barolong, at which the the Government was represented, in this case by the magistrate George Boyes

A strange and complex character was the new chief Besele; of good look and imposing stature, extravagantly lavish in hospitality, elegant and almost sumptuous in his attire, and ostentatious in style, his houses, his horses and his carriages were magnificent in their appointments. Cursory and casual, jocular and clamorous in manner, he was something of a hedonist. At his levees, the cup of Bacchus was a constant object of devotion, while his house was a home of conviviality, and his court-yard a humming hive of drones and sycophants, versed in the gentle art of adulation and flattery. Like his father Montshiwa, Besele was anything but a mysogynist, and eight is the number of ladies upon whom he conferred royalty by marriage. Apart from his eight wives, the chief forcibly reminds one of the good King Henry VIII, in his amours, his terrific will power, his masterful personality united with boyish levity. Like Henry, he made and unmade his ministers at will, married and unmarried as he liked, and always got his own way. He was every inch a chief.

As already mentioned before, Chief Besele had once been to England on a deputation in 1895 to protest against the annexation of British Bechuanaland to Cape Colony, and the transference of Southern Bechuanaland Protectorate to the Chartered Company. The mission proved abortive.

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which was to cost the British 4,000 in gold and 40,000 taken prisoners, while it cost Britain 6,000 men killed and 23,000 wounded and £150,000 in mainly.

Anglo-Boer War and the Siege of Mafeking.

On the 11th October 1899, war was declared between the Boer Republics ~~and the British Government~~ in South Africa and the British Government. This came on after a period of high tension, ~~intense preparation~~ between the belligerents, intense preparation and formation of an alliance on the part of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. This war had ~~not~~ really been in ~~diplomatic~~ progress in a diplomatic form since, and even prior to, the Jameson Raid in 1895. Its roots ~~and~~ its origins, its prodromata ~~and~~ went far back to ~~the~~ the Transvaal War of Independence of 1881, and its amorphous termination, and are also to be traced to the obnoxious pin - ^{during the intervening period.} ~~prick~~ policy of the Imperial Government ~~on~~ towards the Republics ~~&~~. It ~~only~~ required some small pretext to precipitate an armed conflict, and for the two European races to savagely jump at each others' throat. Strong and resolute men were now at the head of affairs on each side: Paul Kruger President of the Transvaal (1883 to 1900), Marthinus T. Steyn, President of the Orange Free State (1896 to 1902), Joseph Chamberlain, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies (1895 to 1903), and Alfred Milner, Her Majesty's Governor of the Cape Colony and Her Majesty's High Commissioner (1897 to 1905). They and their lieutenants ~~blessed and blamed~~ ^{vituperations} each other, dealt freely in vile ~~&~~ imputations and futile recriminations. X

Between the ~~Transvaal~~ Tshidi section of the Barolong, whose headquarters is Mafeking, and the Transvaal Boers, there had never been much love lost since the struggles for territory from 1881 to 1885. One might say since since the 1871 disputes about the Western boundary of the Transvaal and the ownership of the diamond districts, disputes aggravated rather than mollified by Governor Keate's decision. Or one might trace the Barolong-Boer animosity still further back to the quarrels of 1851 about land, labour, taxes, status and jurisdiction which the Transvaal sought to usurp from the Barolong of Mentshiwa.

When war became imminent between the Boer Republics and Britain, ^{Tshidi} it was thus a foregone conclusion as to which side the Barolong would throw in their sympathy and support. Before the commencement of hostilities, however, Boer emissaries made overtures to the Barolong chief Besele Montshiwa with a view to obtaining Barolong alliance or assistance. The chief, to gain time, asked for a few few days to think the matter over with his people. But the ~~his~~ answer was so long in forthcoming that General Cronje

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These forces were subsequently divided into three divisions under Glynne, Glynne, and Glynne. They and their lieutenants divided and planned each other, dealt freely in imputations and futile recriminations, and the latter was left with an on the siege of Mafeking. The Transvaal Boers, there had never been much love since the 1871 disputes about the Western boundary of the Transvaal and the ownership of the diamond districts, disputes aggravated rather than mollified by Governor Keate's decision. Or one might trace the Barolong-Boer animosity still further back to the quarrels of 1851 about land, labour, taxes, status and jurisdiction which the Transvaal sought to warp from the Barolong of Moshahwa.

When war became imminent between the Boer Republics and Britain, it was thus a foregone conclusion as to which side the Barolong would throw in their sympathy and support. Before the commencement of hostilities, however, Boer emissaries made overtures to the Barolong chief Baselo Mouta with a view to obtaining Barolong alliance or assistance. The chief, to gain time, asked for a few few days to think the matter over with his people. But the answer was so long in forthcoming that General Glynne

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Who was the author of the Mafeking siege?

who was in command, came to the only reasonable conclusion. He then warned the Barolong not to become involved in ^{a white man's} ~~a white man's~~ quarrel. The same sentiments had been expressed by the military and civil authorities at Mafeking, who professed themselves averse from the idea of black and white being in alliance against black and white, showing their ignorance of history, and forgetful of a practice as old as European settlements in South Africa.

When war became inevitable, but several days before its declaration Boer forces ~~approached~~ ^{approached} the frontier, ^{at Poffensien} and massed on the western border of the Transvaal which lies only ^{fifteen} ten miles from Mafeking. The men were mostly drawn from Zeerust, Lichtenburg ^{and Potchefstroom} and Rustenburg. As soon as war was formally declared on the 11th October 1899, these commandos, numbering from ^{the hero of Potchefstroom and Doornkop} 5,000 to 6,000 men crossed the frontier under Commandant Piet Cronje - a man of undoubted bravery, fearful determination, military resourcefulness, and strategic ingenuity. ^{A division of these troops under Gen. Delany} He cut the lines of communication between Mafeking and Vryburg on the south, ^{while others cut the lines} and between Mafeking and Buluwayo on the north, and on the 13th October, ^{Gen Cronje} laid siege to Mafeking - the key to the north. he invested both the European town and the Barolong town.

No sooner did Cronje's commandos invest Mafeking than the absurdity of preventing the Barolong from participating in the war became apparent, and the conceited notion of refusing to give them guns and ammunition was soon abandoned. For Cronje did not make the slightest difference between black and white, or between the European town and the Barolong town. He included both in one ring of investment, about fifteen miles in circumference. He bombarded both alike, and tried to reduce the one as the other to ashes with his twelve different varieties of artillery. Huge 94 lb shells, projected by the breech-loading Creusot siege gun, ~~and~~ 64 lb shells from the howitzer gun, shrapnel from two ^{trupp} Twelve-pounders, shells from the Nine-pounder high velocity ^{trupp} as well as from five Seven-pounder and a Five-pounder Krupp and a One-pounder Maxim. These played incessantly over the European and Barolong townships, and to escape or minimise their murderous effects, the civilian population, ~~black~~ black and white, lived throughout ~~the~~ the seven months of the siege in deep excavations (dug-outs), made shell proof by covering them over with heaps of earth. A special guard was posted on the lookout, and as soon as ~~the~~ smoke issued from the muzzle of a big gun, he rang a bell. This was the signal for people to take shelter. Then there would be a ^{rush} and

a scramble for the nearest dug-out, while people on the open roads prostrated themselves until the shell was heard to burst.

There were some 8,000 Africans and 1,500 Europeans besieged in Mafeking. The strength of the garrison was about 1,000 rifles. The Boers were, of course, far superior in numbers, armaments and strategic position. Sunday was generally observed by the belligerents as a day of truce, and besieged and besiegers moved about with a feeling of safety, and even men in the trenches even exchanged some good natured chaff. Besides physical and religious ~~exercises~~ exercises, the besieged did their shopping on Sundays.

On the whole, the beleaguered garrison was in a very parlous plight. Mr W.P. Schreiner the Prime Minister and his cabinet, with a stubbornness almost amounting to treason, or a ~~very~~ stupidity difficult to condone, had turned a deaf ear to all the demands of Col R. Baden-Powell for armaments and reinforcements for Mafeking. The Premier's excuse ~~was~~ had been that such precautions were unnecessary. This assurance nearly cost the British Government Kimberley as well as Mafeking. Schreiner's ~~refusal~~ indifference and blindness, so far from discomfitting Baden-Powell steeled his iron will and he and his officers put Mafeking into such state of defence that it was ultimately able to defy the onslaughts of the enemy. There were not enough guns to go round, and many Barolong men had to use their own private guns, and ammunition that had been collected and stored against emergency by the hold chief Montshiwa. Even then, many able bodied men had to go without guns until they could capture them from the enemy. The Barolong were able to raise only a thousand rifles; while they could have about 2,000 men, and for these they could find only a thousand rifles.

On the 25th October, Commandant Cronje stormed the beleaguered garrison, and made a determined attack on the Barolong village with a view to forcing an entry into Mafeking. The Barolong under Chief Lekoko Montshiv supported by two European squadrons under Capt Marsh, waited behind their ramparts, and then suddenly opened a heavy fire upon the enemy, driving him off with much physical and moral damage. The coolness and gallantry of the Barolong contingent opened the eyes of the military authorities to the possibility of ~~successfully~~ successfully holding Mafeking by employment of more Barolong troops, and so a few more rifles were distributed among them.

After this sharp engagement, the besiegers shelled the Barolong town and western defences daily, and occasioned much damage in life and property.

It was soon after shown that the enemy were massing troops on the west, and bringing up their heavy artillery, with the evident intention of again storming the garrison from the Barolong side of the defences, but they were forestalled by Major Godley, who attacked them early on the morning of the 7th November, being supported by Capt Marsh's squadrons, and Barolong regiments. Some ⁵⁰⁰⁰ 6,000 to 8,000 Boers, under the high command of ^{The formidable} Cronje himself took part in this battle, but they were beaten off with heavy casualties. These defeats of the besiegers, due in no small measure to the discipline and bravery of the Barolong troops induced Cronje to complain that "kafir troops" were being used against him.

On the 18th November, Commandant Cronje was called away for more important duties against General Methuen in the southern theatre of war the war, and the command of the besiegers was delegated to General J.P. ^{He left with 1000 burghers} Snyman. ^{An old friend of the Barolong with whom he had crossed swords and parleys with} He at once complained to Baden-Powell about the latter's employment of Barolong troops, and Baden-Powell answered; - "Regarding your complaint as to your being attacked by Natives, I beg to refer you to my letter dated 14th November to your predecessor General Cronje. In this letter I went out of my way, as one white man to another, to warn you that the Natives are becoming extremely incensed at your stealing their cattle, and the wanton burning of their kraals; they argued that the war lay only between our two nations, and that the quarrel had nothing to do with themselves, and they had remained neutral in consequence, except in the case of the Mafeking Barolongs, who had to defend their ~~their~~ homes in consequence of your unjustifiable invasion. Nevertheless, you thought fit to carry on cattle thefts and raids against them, and you are now beginning to feel the consequences, and as I told you I could not be responsible. And I fear from what I have just heard by wireless telegraph that the Natives are contemplating further operations should your forces continue to remain within or on the borders of their territories. Before the commencement of the war, the High Commissioner issued stringent orders to all Natives that they were to remain quiet and not to take up arms unless their territory were invaded, in which case of course they had a perfect right to defend themselves...." While on the subject of Natives, please do not suppose that I am ignorant of what you have been doing with regard to seeking the assistance of armed Natives, nor of the use of Natives by you in the destruction of

ii the railway line south of Mafeking. "

It is very true that the Barolong suffered at least as much as the Europeans besieged in Mafeking. They endured the same privations, the same pestilential diseases and infections, the same fatalities from shell and rifle fire. Their farms were raided, their farms and lands laid waste, and their outlying homesteads and houses burnt and wantonly destroyed by the Boers. As the siege dragged on from month to month, food difficulties increased more and more, and many Barolong men, women and children were swept off by sheer inanition and the usual pestilences of famine and defective sanitation - dysentery and typhoid fever - as well as malaria, diphtheria and scurvy. The prices of foodstuffs shot up, eggs being 12/- per dozen, fowls 7/6 each and meal 50/- per bag, while beef and mutton were rarities. It was then that horses and donkeys were killed to supply the Barolong with meat, while brawn was made from the hides of these animals. Bread was prepared from rye meal and oat meal, while the husks of these cereals were made into "sowen porridge" and sold at nominal prices or given out gratis in special "soup kitchens". Beneficent Providence also sent frequent swarms of locusts, which settled right in the town and village, and which the besieged collected assiduously, cooked and relished as the choicest article of food. Every edible berry or vegetable plant was ingested to appease the pangs of hunger. ~~Skins~~ Dried skins, skin rugs and skin mats were experimented upon to make jelly for food, but all these ~~means~~ measures were not enough to allay the gnawing pains of famine, and many of the poorer classes killed cats and dogs, and stewed them for food. Human flesh must indeed be detestable and unwholesome, for even in this bitter extremity, no one ever thought of resorting to man-eating.

To ^{escape} ~~mitigate~~ these privations, parties of Barolong women and children occasionally left Mafeking stealthily, and crept through between the Boer lines to get away into the open country. Frequently they were seen by the Boers and mercifully allowed to pass unmolested. Sometimes the besiegers would drive them back into Mafeking to suffer with their kin. Occasionally some women were treated with revolting cruelty - stripped, beaten, a few having their breasts cut or ~~some~~ some even shot in cold blood.

No wonder that the Barolong men immersed themselves with ^{all} ~~in~~ their being into this war which soon pinched and destroyed them. Under their leaders Lekoko Montshiwa

Lekoko Montshiwa and Silas Molema they manned the western defences of the Barolong town and invariably gave a good account of themselves, while the Barolong snipers worried the Boers and exacted a heavy toll on them.

^{an expert hunter.} Mathakgong Kepadisa, a man versed in all the wiles and ruses of veld craft organised cattle raiding forays, and with band of expert cattle lifters executed many daring exploits, and had many hair-breadth escapes in ~~the~~ stealing Boer cattle almost right before their eyes, and driving them into the besieged town, and thus helping to keep the besieged in meat.

Several Barolong young men also acted as runners and post carriers, and it was often by their services that ~~news~~ news of what was happening on the ~~side~~ Mafeking was received. The relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith, ~~and the~~ ~~fall of Bloemfontein and Pretoria~~ the defeat and capture of Cronje at Paardeberg on the 8th March 1896, the fall of Bloemfontein and Pretoria, news of these events were first known ^{in Mafeking} through Barolong channels.

Besides the Barolong regiments, the ~~Rux~~ Eur-African (or so-called Cape Boy) Regiment under its coloured Sgt-Major Taylor and Corporal Currie displayed wonderful military qualities. "Good men, fair shots, very brave and have accounted for quite a large number of Boers while out sniping" is a brief commentary of one authority who knew them: coloured soldiers.

There was also the black "Black Watch", a squadron of Tembus and Shangaans under Sgt Mackenzie. These men also distinguished themselves for bravery.

At the beginning of the war, many Europeans wrongly imagined that the Barolong ~~were~~ were only watching and waiting to throw in their lot with the winning side, and that, therefore, if the Boers had been successful at the outset, the Barolong would have joined them. This is the view of people totally ignorant of Barolong history, and unaware of the ~~existing~~ hostility that has existed between the Tshidi Barolong and the Boers for generations, such that the two races could never fight in the same camp.

At the commencement of the war, Boer forces ~~were~~ were, generally speaking, everywhere successful. Mafeking, Kimberley and Ladysmith were ~~so~~ closely invested by the allied forces of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and all attempts to relieve them seemed to be fated to failure.

General Methuen's advance from the south to relieve Kimberley was arrested and frustrated, ^{and what little progress he made at Belmont, Roubidge and Madder Rivers was made} and Colonel Kekewich was effectually hemmed in ^{by Commandants Wessels and Botha.} ^{at an unwarrantable sacrifice, for Detachment Boers under Delany exacted a terrible toll in the} ^{Barolong ranks}

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