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Your Excellency's notice that due notice has been given to the occupants on the place called Poosedumane (Grootfontein) to quit, and that a party of my people has been instructed by me to proceed to that place to plough over and sow the lands," and on the 15th of May 1877 he wrote out a notice to the squatters of Vleyfontein to quit forthwith.

~~XKENNISGEVING~~ KENNISGEVING:
Zijt bekend dat ik de onderge~~te~~^{te} tigen beval alle menschen de op Vleyfontein is, dat zij alle grond moet verlaat om dat ik zelf de grond alleen deze jaar ploeg en zaai, en dat geen mensch dat buiten mijne order gezaaid heeft helzelve zaai ~~maai~~ maaij. Montshiwa: Kapitein des Barolongs.

Aan de inwoners op Vleyfontein

At the same time Montshiwa gave writtem authority to his brother Saane and some of his counsellors Stephen Lefenya to proceed to Vleyfontein to plough his lands.

Imagine ^{his} ~~the~~ surprise and chagrin when he received a letter from C.B.Schoitz, Commissioner at Lichtenburg, now ~~in~~ in the service of the British Government, in ~~these~~ these terms; "Johannes Coetzee complains of your people having come with intention to plough up his farm. I request you to stop them at once, and I give no notice that the Keate Award is of no avail. Coetzee will continue in his occupation rights and must not be disturbed."

Feeling provoked, Montshiwa immediately wrote Schoitz a letter far from conciliatory, and practically accusing him of duplicity and divided loyalty :-

I am surprised at the contents of your letter, more especially as you have now assumed office under the British Government. How is it then that acknowledging as you do now the existence of the Keate Award you still seek to get over the Line to exercise your jurisdiction in a country that has been given me by that Award? Allow me to ask you to what purpose it would have been, if after having the country fairly arbitrated these people were allowed to remain? For what purpose did I seek it? Was it that I might merely exercise my chieftaiship? Or was it not rather that I sought for arable ground and water for ~~sustaining~~ the purpose of sustaining my people with food? Much rather the latter. I shall at once exercise my authority over the country which has been awarded me by giving instructions to my people to plough over the lands at Vleyfontein. "

Note

Be it known that I the undersigned hereby order all the people who
are in Valleyforden to vacate the place as I intend to plough
and plant it this year and that no one else shall be allowed to reap this crop
without my express order.

Montagu - Chief of the Barons
To the Dwellers of Valleyforden

At the same time Montagu gave written authority to his brother Edmund
and some of his counsellors Stephen Bellens to proceed to Valleyforden
through his lands.
Imagine his surprise and anger when he received a letter
from C. B. Scholze, Commissioner at Montagu, now in the service of
the British Government, in which these terms: Johannes Goetzke complains
of your people having come with intention to plough up his land.
request you to stop them at once, and I give no notice that the Goetzke
award is of no avail. Goetzke will continue in his occupation rights
and must not be disturbed.
Feeling provoked, Montagu immediately wrote Scholze a letter
far from conciliatory, and practically accusing him of duplicity and
divided loyalty :-
I am surprised at the contents of your letter, more
especially as you have now assumed office under the British Government.
How is it then that acknowledging as you do now the existence of the
Goetzke award you still seek to get over the line to exercise your juris-
diction in a country that has been given me by that award? Allow me
to ask you to what purpose it would have been, after having the com-
try fairly exercised these people were allowed to remain? For what
purpose did I seek it? Was it that I might merely exercise my chief-
tanship? Or was it not rather that I sought for exultation and water
for maintaining the purpose of sustaining my people with food? Such rather
the latter. I shall at once exercise my authority over the country which
has been awarded me by giving instructions to my people to plough over
the lands at Valleyforden.

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Naturally enough, Scholtz was taken aback and angered by the high tone of this letter and at once answered :

Kapitein: Tot ~~antwoord~~ antwoord is dien ende dat ik zelf naar Pretoria ga om Sir Theophilus Shepstone te spreken oor de zaken...Verder zoo ek u vriendelyk raaden om niet weder op zoo eene heftige toon aan mij te schrywen . "

To Pretoria, then, Scholtz went. He interviewed Administrator Shepstone, told him about Montshiwa and showed him the chief's letters. Then he came back to Lichtenburg, presumably with enlarged powers and assurance, for he at once gave Montshiwa notice to quit Vleyfontein within five days. Shepstone himself wrote to Montshiwa (2/6/1877) a letter of sharp rebuke which he handed to Scholtz, and the latter victoriously read it and handed it to the bewildered Montshiwa. Thus it went :-

"Chief Montsioa: Mr Scholtz, a Commissioner of this Government at Lichtenburg has presented personally to me a letter to him, signed or purporting to be signed by Montsioa, together with a notice to Mr Coetzee owning or claiming to own the farm Vleyfontein. The language and tone of both these papers are not what I should have expected and I am afraid that they have been adopted without due consideration of the consequences and perhaps upon advice of persons who are anxious for reasons of their own to see trouble come upon the Barolong chief and people ;... I am as yet unacquainted with the circumstances which in Montsioa's opinion give him the right to use threatening language to subjects of this Government.

Montsioa knows that violence on one side provokes violence. I trust that whatever his claim may be, Montsioa has withdrawn all interference with farmers of this territory who have hitherto occupied these farms without molestation ."

In reply to your letter I have to say that I am personally going
to discuss matters with Sir George Stephenson... Further
I must advise you in a friendly manner that to write to me
again in such a vehement tone.

Montshiwa was nettled by this rebuke which he felt was ill-judged and made, as the administrator himself admitted, without acquaintance with the circumstances and facts connected with the dispute, except such as Scholtz cared to reveal. Nevertheless he replied courteously but firmly and without any cringing; 14th June 1877, "I must inform your Excellency that my letters are my own, thought out and and dictated by myself. I feel grieved that you should have listend to all that Mr Scholtz told you and come to such a conclusion as to impute evil without first making inquiries ... I have kept up friendly intercourse with the British Government for the last 30 years. It was this that made me to seek at the last Arbitration at Bloemhof the ^{support} of Her Majesty's ~~are~~ Government} ... Nothing seemed to be left unturned on the part of the Transvaal to upset the Keate Award, and I trusted to the British sense of right.

Your Excellency cannot deny that by the Keate Award the country is mine. I was only hindered from taking possession of my country, not because it was not mine, but because of commandos.

I rejoiced in hearing your Proclamation (of Annexation) read, and thought that now my struggles were nearly ended. But now my hopes are dashed to the ground, and that by Your Excellency... Your letter has not strengthened friendly intercourse between us, for you make my position that of 20 ago when I was driven from my fountains of waters.

As Your Excellency does not understand the circumstances connected with my country, I have sent (your letter) to His Excellency W. Owen Lanyon Esq, who is informed in all matters respecting these parts."

And sure enough he sent his son Kebalépilé and his nephew Israel Molema to report the whole incident to Lanyon whom he also addressed as follows:-

"Since writing to you last I have received a letter from His Excellency Sir Theophilus ^{Shep} Shepstone in which he threatens to confirm the Boers in the country occupied by them within

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the line accorded me by Keate, and, further Commissioner Scholtz has ^v given me five days notice to leave the lands ploughed by my people. My ^s position is now worse than ever it has been and I now send my son to confer with you to know what would be the best course to ^{pur} consue under the circumstances".

Judge J.D. Barry who was there acting during Lanyon's absence advised Montshiwa to lay his grievances at the earliest opportunity before Sir Theophilus Shepstone the Queen's representative in the Transvaal, that State and its British Administrator being now ~~that~~ Montshiwa's nearest ⁿ neighbour.

As may be expected Lanyon took the matter up with Shepstone and presumably educated him in the history of the Bloemhof Arbitration and the Keate Award and the loyalty of Montshiwa to the British Government.

In July 1877, Administrator Shepstone paid a visit to Lichtenburg, Ventersdorp, Zeerust, Rustenburg, etc and although Montshiwa had asked him for an interview there, he instructed Commissioner Scholtz to write to the chief to say "It was impossible to see him this time, but hoped soon to be down in these parts again when he will be most happy to see him." words in which Montshiwa saw official red tape and bureaucratic evasion.

Montshiwa was however not to be put off. On the 26th July he wrote again to Shepstone, asking him to hasten his visit, to ~~th~~ the border to finalise the boundary question, and that pending his visit, the Boers at Vleyfontein should be put under the same restraint as the Barolong. On the 27th October Montshiwa wrote again to the Administrator, sending him a long catalogue of protests and representations, and gently reminding him that he had not as yet acknowledged his letters.

^{and} Reconciliation/pleasant relations were now restored between Montshiwa and Commissioner Scholtz. They were able to condole with each other in their family bereavements, and Scholtz was able

to write to Montshiwa (10th Nov. 1877) "I am glad to see you are ~~going~~ going the right way to work... I am confident and state such to you that His Excellency will not see you suffer."

On the 1st (or 7th December) Monthsiwa feeling totally frustrated wrote once more to his friend Administrator Owen Lanyon.

"I have many troubles in my country and can find no peace. His Excellency Sir Theophilus Shepstone both refuses to reply to my letters;;; and to come and settle our dispute on the border. The result is that I am harassed by the border Boers... I cannot understand my position with the British Government. I have sought ^{their} ~~their~~ friendship for the last 30 years as well as ~~the~~ their advice in all critical circumstances, I have always tried to adhere to their counsel at all times, I have withstood advances made to me by the Transvaal authorities which would have led to some ^{one} ~~comprise~~, and this I have done, solely by reason of overtures made to me by the British Government. And what have I gained? Just ~~nothing~~ and worse than nothing, for my people are kept out of their country and are starving.

After repeated applications to Sir Theophilus Shepstone to settle our dispute I am now going to meet him personally at Pretoria, and shall not return until I have had an interview with him. It is impossible for me to continue any ^{longer} ~~longer~~ in this state - the menace of the Boers, as well as Moshete and Matlaba who claim to belong to the old (Republican Government) and thereby try to monopolise my country through certain treaties made by the late President (Burgers) and themselves, and ^{also} ~~as~~ the silence of the British authorities to all my representations. All this makes my position most trying, and makes me wonder whether I have not mistaken the British Government, yet I hope and await the result of my interview with His Excellency.

I write to you, my friend, not because I seek help from you, but as I have been in communication with you on behalf of my country just that you may know my awkward position through the taking

over of the Transvaal (by the British Government)."

To this letter Lanyon replied; "My Good Friend, I think you are right in going yourself to see Sir Theophilus Shepstone in order to explain your position to him."

On the 13th December, Montshiwa though old, fat, heavy and short of breath went to Pretoria accompanied by his secretary Stephen Lefenya to see Shepstone in person. ^{in a preforatory note} As he said [^]

"I have travelled so far with the hope that Your Excellency may be able to grant me an interview to enable me personally to ~~xxx~~, represent my case to you."

It was an unfortunate visit, because as Government Secretary Melmoth Osborn informed Montshiwa, His Excellency was away on the Zulu border in connection with serious questions with Cetywayo whose army was menacing the Transvaal, and the date of his return to Pretoria was uncertain."

In the absence of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Montshiwa laid his complaints before Government Secretary M. Osborn (17th Dec.)

1. That his (Montshiwa's) letters remained unanswered by the Government.

2. That six years had now passed since the Keate Award was made, and he wanted the Government to help him occupy the country so awarded him.

3. That the corn, raised upon his ground by his labour with his oxen and ploughs, and now stacked up in Commissioner Scholtz's store while awaiting His Excellency's decision was his own and should be delivered to him, as he and his people were in want of food. This complaint he said was one of his chief reasons for coming to Pretoria.

4. That Matlaba (Machavie) was occupying his (Montshiwa's) land at Polfontein. Matlaba had obtained his right ^{and} authority from President Burgers who had no title to it and no right to dispose of the land.

5. Matlaba had robbed his (Montshiwa's) people of their cattle and sheep. The matter had been referred to Commissioner Scholtz, who had decided in Montshiwa's favour, but Scholtz either could not, or would not restore the property.

6. Moshete was also occupying his (Montshiwa's) land at Khunwana and causing a lot of trouble to his (Montshiwa's) people by attempting to drive them away or threatening them.

At this point, Osborn suddenly remembered and unearthed a letter dictated to him by Shepstone for transmission to Montshiwa on the 3rd of December, but which had never been posted.

Most probably
Possibly due first to the intervention of Administrator Lanyon and party to the firm and fearless answer of Montshiwa, the tone of this second letter of Shepstone was much more conciliatory and was a definite retreat on the first. It started that "It was from reasoning on general principles, and with a strong desire to preserve peace and goodwill between the parties concerned that His Excellency dictated the first letter ... of which you complained to the Administrator in Kimberley." further

His Excellency complained of what appeared to be Montshiwa's taking the law into his own hands, righting what he considered a wrong done to him and ignoring the Government and even acting in opposition to the Government.

The gist of, ^{all} which was that His Excellency was not sufficiently acquainted with the question (i.e. dispute about Vleyfontein and Polfontein) and does not consider ~~him~~ himself able to arrive at a just conclusion in regard to it. Viewing the uncertainty of the absolute rights of both parties, His Excellency would prefer that an arrangement equitable to both should be arrived at through the mediating of the Commissioner at Lichtenburg, pending ultimate action by the High Commissioner.

1. Possibly due etc
2. Further His Excellency complained etc
3. The main gist of this second letter, however, etc.

In his persistent way Montshiwa ^{followed} ~~second~~ up the second paragraph ^{it} which he did not admit, and in answering the following day whilst in Petoria wrote: "His Excellency must have been misinformed if he thinks that I would act in any way in opposition to Her Majesty's Government. I have always felt, and do yet feel the most sincere regard for Her Majesty's rule in South Africa, and as far as I can, will endeavour to support her rule. I believe ^{ie} what I have done has been with the concurrence of Her Majesty's representative at the Diamond Fields." I am placed in a most unsatisfactory position. I wish to do right, but I hear nothing... I have received no acknowledgement to my letters."

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Montshiwa returned to Mafikeng without having received satisfaction. As soon as he knew that Sir T. Shepstone had returned to P Pretoria from the Zulu border, he addressed a letter to him ⁱⁿ ~~in~~quiring

"when he might except the honour of His Excellency's promised visit."

"Your Excellency as chief must see the way your people treat mine. They look upon ^{us} as game or wild animals. I wish to honour the law of peace.. but these people who are creating disturbance and beating others, under which law do they live? Make things right as chief; Remove these people from amongst us: Turn out these evil doers. I have been most patient and long-suffering in trying to honour Your Excellency's Government, but nothing is being done (for me)."

In two weeks' time (30th March 1878) a reply came that "the existance of serious questions on the Zulu border had prevented His Excellency from visiting Montshiwa's neighbourhood, but that

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