

A SHORT HISTORY
OF THE
BAKGATLA-bagaKGATLA
OF BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

by

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

I have dealt with other aspects of Kgatla life and history
in the following publications :

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I.S.

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I. THE BEGINNINGS OF TRIBAL HISTORY¹

The name BaKgatla is shared by several different groups of Bantu-speaking people inhabiting the central and western districts of the Transvaal and the south-eastern portions of the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

Among the more important of these groups are:

- (a) the BaKgatla-baMosetlha, in the Hamanskraal District of the Transvaal;
- (b) the BaKgatla-bagaKgafela, in the Kgatla Reserve of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the Rustenburg District of the Transvaal;
- (c) the BaKgatla-bagaMmanana, in the Ngwaketse and Kwena Reserves of the Bechuanaland Protectorate;
- (d) the BaKgatla-baMmakau, in the Pretoria District of the Transvaal; and
- (e) the BaKgatla-baMotšha, in the Hamanskraal District of the Transvaal.

According to their traditions, all these groups were at one time united under the rule of a single chief. This parent tribe is said by some authorities to have been founded by, or to be named after, Mokgatla, a son or later descendant of the Malope who is the traditional progenitor of so many other

/tribes

1. Principal sources: I. Schapera, Ditirafalô tsa Merafe ya BaTswana (Lovedale 1940), pp. 152-61, and other (unpublished) information obtained at Mochudi, 1929-34. Cf. also: A.J. Woekey, Dicô tsa Becwana (3rd edition; Tigerkloof 1929), pp. 73, 75-78; and History of the Native Tribes of the Transvaal (Pretoria 1905), pp. 27 f.

tribes of the Tswana group, to which the BaKgatla belong.¹ The BaKgatla themselves, however, say to-day that they are an offshoot of the BaHurutshe, from whom they seceded under a leader named Malekeleke. But nothing is known of the reasons for the secession, nor of the circumstances under which the BaKgatla acquired as their totem the ape (kgabo), whereas that of the BaHurutshe was originally the baboon (tshweng).

The genealogies of the Kgatla chiefs show that Botlolo, Malekeleke's direct descendant in the fourth generation, had two sons, Mogale and Tabane. During Mogale's reign, the tribe divided. Tabane went north with a large following, which subsequently became subdivided into the modern BaKgatla-baMmakau and the BaKgatla-baMotšha. Mogale stayed behind at Diroleng (in the present Rustenburg District of the Transvaal), but under either him or one of his immediate successors his people later moved to what is now "Makapaan's Location", in the Hamanskraal District north of Pretoria.² It was here that, not long afterwards, the BaKgatla-bagaKgafêla also broke away from them.

The traditions of the BaKgatla-bagaKgafêla relate that Mogale's son Matshêgô had in his great house a daughter only, named Mosêtlha, and in his second house a son named Kgafêla. On the death of Matshêgô, there was a dispute about the succession to the chieftainship. Some of the people wanted Mosêtlha to succeed, since she was the child of the great wife. The others refused to be ruled by a woman, and said that Kgafêla should become chief, for he was the senior son. The tribe split on the issue, and Kgafêla with his adherents broke away from the rest. Henceforth they considered themselves a separate tribe, and became known, after their leader, as the BaKgatla-bagaKgafêla. The people remaining behind with Mosêtlha similarly became known, after her, as the BaKgatla-baMosêtlha.³

We cannot state accurately when the separation took place between the baMosêtlha and the bagaKgafêla, but the evidence contained in the genealogies of the chiefs suggests that it was probably towards the end of the seventeenth century or early in the eighteenth. The history for the next seventy years or so of the bagaKgafêla (whom I shall henceforth refer to simply as "BaKgatla", except when closer identification is necessary) is only vaguely recorded in traditions that are both sketchy and often conflicting.

It is said that, after separating from the baMosêtlha, the bagaKgafêla settled first at Tsekane, east of the Crocodile River. Here they were ruled successively by Kgafêla and by his son Tebele. But the place proved to be very unhealthy owing to fever, and so, in the reign of Masellane (Tebele's son and successor), they crossed the Crocodile River, and, after camping for a while at Matome, ultimately settled at Molokwane, at the junction of the Piemaars and Crocodile Rivers.

/At

1. Cf. History of the Native Tribes of the Transvaal [= H.N.T.T.], p. 27.

2. Ibid., p. 28.

3. According to H.N.T.T. (p. 27), the BaKgatla-bagaKgafêla broke away from the baMosêtlha "upon the death of Mokgatla ... for reasons unknown", and it was after this that the baMmakau and the baMotšha seceded also from the baMosêtlha. Another version (published in Mosupa-Tsela, vol. xix, no. 4, April 1932, p. 4) states that the BaKgatla were originally part of the BaKwena, and lived for a long time at Mabyanamatshwaane (Swartkoppies, near Brits). Then they began moving south, leaving behind the section now known as baMfatlha (baBididi). Afterwards the bagaMmanaana broke away. The others continued to move on, until they reached the Ntwane mountains [?], where they settled. Here there was a dispute about the chieftainship. Mosêtlha should have succeeded, but his [?er] brother Matshêgô refused to acknowledge him and seceded with part of the tribe. The latter then became known, after Matshêgô's son, as BaKgatla-bagaKgafêla. Subsequently the baMmakau and the baMotšha also broke away.

At that time the country between the Crocodile River and the Pilansberg Mountains was under the control of the BaTlhako. Masellane paid them tribute in return for being allowed to settle in their territory. Before long, however, he refused to continue the payment, and he also began to conduct his own bogwera (circumcision ceremonies), without seeking permission from the BaTlhako. As this was equivalent to an assertion of independence, the BaTlhako attacked him and his people. A period of intermittent warfare ensued, from which the BaKgatla ultimately emerged victorious. Masellane then moved his village to Mabule, a hill at what is now Saulspoort in the Pilansberg Mountains. Here he died of extreme old age. There is a story that towards the end of his life he was deserted by his sons, who found him an encumbrance. In his bitterness of heart he cursed them, saying that none of his successors would ever live to be as old as himself, and he called himself, Phetwe or Pheto, "The deserted one". His curse came true, say the tribal historians, for with the exception of Kgwefane, Molefê, and Lentswa, none of the subsequent Kgatla chiefs ruled for long. Hence the local saying, Dikgesi tsa Kgatleng di ilwa ke setsho, "Kgatla chiefs are hated by the setsho", i.e. few chiefs have lived to see their heirs pass through the second stage (setsho) of the bogwera.

Masellane's own heir, Madise, had been killed during the lifetime of his father in a raid upon the BaRokologadi. There remained another son in the great house, named Mare. His future bride had been chosen, but before he could marry her he also died. Modimokwana, the eldest son in the second house, should now according to custom have lived with the girl, in order to beget an heir in the great house. But he refused to do so, probably because he wished to secure the chieftainship for himself and his line. Thereupon Masellane's other sons, Rampedi (of the third house) and Têkê (of the fourth house), agreed privately that the latter should take over the girl. She bore him a son, named Kgwefane, who was secretly brought up by her own people. Masellane then died, and Modimokwana ruled as Chief. As Kgwefane grew to maturity, Rampedi and Têkê gradually began to organize a following for him in the tribe. As soon as he had been initiated, they claimed the chieftainship for him, asserting that he was, because of his mother's original status, the legal heir of Mare. Modimokwana refused to acknowledge him, but Kgwefane's supporters, helped by the Mabodisa tribe, succeeded in gaining the day. Modimokwana fled, and Kgwefane was accepted as chief without further dispute.

Little is remembered of Kgwefane, except that during his reign, which was long, the BaRokologadi were finally conquered and absorbed into the tribe, of which they still form a section.

Kgwefane was succeeded by his son Molefê, in whose time the tribe was greatly enlarged by the absorption of the BaMabodisa and the BaMadibana. Both these peoples were also BaKgatla by origin, probably later offshoots from the baMosêtlha, and they had for some time been living near the bagaKgafêla. The BaMabodisa had in the past proved too strong for the bagaKgafêla to conquer, but during Molefê's reign they were finally overcome by an ingenious though cruel strategy. He sent his men to collect live tsetse flies (the Western Transvaal was at that time a fly area), which were strewn all over the trees and bushes in the veld where the cattleposts of the Mabodisa people were situated. The latter in consequence lost most of their stock, and, being reduced to poverty, they submitted to the rule of the BaKgatla. They have ever since constituted an important part of the tribe, and are one of the five main administrative units (dikgôrô) into which it is divided.

The BaMadibana seem to have joined the bagaKgafêla voluntarily, and Molefê's marriage with their chief's daughter consolidated the alliance. For a long time they had their own village, like the BaMabodisa, but in later years they split up into several groups, owing to internal dissensions, and they are now scattered about in different dikgôrô. When they first joined the bagaKgafêla, they had under them a people called BaManamakgôtê (or BaMatlhalerwa). The latter afterwards threw off the immediate paramountcy of the BaMadibana, and now constitute another of the five main dikgôrô in the tribe.

/After

After Molefô's death (? c.1790), his younger brother Makgotso ruled the tribe, since the heir, Pheto, was too young to succeed. While Makgotso was regent, the BaKgatla helped the BaTlôkwa (of Chief Bogatswe) to fight against the BaFokeng of Moseletsane (alias Sekete II). The cattle of the BaFokeng had been destroying the crops of the BaTlôkwa, who, unable to secure direct redress, appealed to the BaKgatla for help. Makgotso asked Moseletsane to stop troubling the BaTlôkwa, and to keep his cattle from crossing the boundary (the Eland's River). Moseletsane ignored the message, and, with the aid of the BaMatlhako, BaKubung, BaPô, and several other small tribes, set out to attack the BaTlôkwa and the BaKgatla. A battle was fought near Pilwe (the home of the BaTlôkwa), in which the BaKgatla first defeated Moseletsane's allies and then helped the BaTlôkwa to defeat the BaFokeng also. Moseletsane himself was captured, and so were his allied chiefs. The latter were set free. Makgotso wished to release Moseletsane also, but Bogatswe insisted on having him killed. Makgotso protested that it was not the custom of the BaKgatla to kill chiefs captured in war. The BaTlôkwa replied that Moseletsane had given them too much trouble to be allowed to live any longer. They appeased Makgotso by giving him Bogatswe's daughter Nkae as wife, and all the cattle looted from the BaFokeng; they then killed Moseletsane in the shade of a very tall tree, which is said to be still standing at Seloane's Kraal (Rustenburg District).¹

Pheto, on attaining maturity, was formally installed as chief by Makgotso. Soon afterwards the two quarrelled, Makgotso complaining that he was not given a large enough share of the cattle looted from other tribes. Unable to receive what he regarded as adequate satisfaction, he left the tribe. After a brief stay with the BaTlôkwa, he went to the BaKwena, whose Chief Legwale was closely related to him in the maternal line. He told the BaKwena that he had been driven from home by his elder brother's son, and he persuaded Legwale to accompany him back with an army. The BaKgatla were then living at Sefikile (Spitzkop 298), a hill to the north of Saulspoort. Here a battle took place, in which the BaKgatla surrounded and defeated the BaKwena, capturing both Legwale and Makgotso. Most of the BaKwena escaped, but Pheto sent ahead one of his regiments to waylay them. It was winter, and he instructed his men to light fires all along the road and then to lie in ambush near by. The BaKwena, as they came along, stopped to warm themselves at the fires, which they thought had been kindled by their own people; but while they were resting there, the BaKgatla would rush out upon them. This was kept up all night long, and many BaKwena were killed. Legwale and Makgotso remained captives with the BaKgatla for about a year, and were then sent back home with large gifts of cattle. Makgotso's descendants are living among the BaKwena to this day, his grandson, Phuthê-gêlô Selemogo, being recognized there (at Molepolole) as a leading authority on tribal law and history.

Pheto after this made several successful cattle raids against neighbouring tribes, like the BaMmatau, BaTlhako, BaFokeng, BaKwena-baMogopa, BaNgwaketse, and BaHurutshe.² Little is remembered of these campaigns, but it is said that during his reign the tribe was joined by many aliens, including the BaPhalane and the BaMasiana, and became very powerful, claiming sovereignty over the greater part of the land in the triangle formed by the Crocodile, Marico, and Eland's, Rivers.

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1. This story is confirmed (in bare outline) by the traditions of the BaFokeng (cf. H.N.T.T., p. 16). For the Tlôkwa version, which differs greatly, cf. V. Ellenberger, "History of the BaTlôkwa of Geberones", Bantu Studies, vol. xiii, 1939, p. 172.

2. H.N.T.T., p. 27.

II. THE PERIOD OF CHAOS¹

After Pheto's death (c.1810), his younger brother Senwêlô became regent for the heir, Letsêbê, who was still a minor. Relations between the two were at first friendly, and Senwêlô, by all accounts, seems to have carried out his duties conscientiously. After a while, however, there was a fatal break. Senwêlô had married a woman named Nketso, daughter of a local headman. Letsêbê was attracted by her, and became her lover. Senwêlô discovered this, and complained one day to the men at the kgotla (council-place) that he had been "driven from his own hut" by his nephew. A certain Makgaswa, who had been one of Pheto's dintona (confidential assistants), reported this statement to Letsêbê's mother, and said that it was a threat against the life of her son. She and Makgaswa, with others of their following, thereupon decided to kill Senwêlô first. He learned of the plot, and fled to Mabodisa village, intending to go on from there to his maternal relatives at Madibana. But the BaMabodisa detained him, and sent to the chief's village (Kgosing) to report his presence and to find out why he had fled. In the meantime, the young men of Senwêlô's own regiment (the Madima) had looted two of the royal cattle-posts. They brought the cattle to Senwêlô at Mabodisa village, where they killed and ate some. Senwêlô and the Mabodisa people upbraided them severely for having acted thus without authority. But the mischief was already done. The herdboys at the cattleposts had run to the chief's village to report the raid. They got there while the messengers from Mabodisa were still awaiting a reply. On receipt of the news, the messengers were accused of having been sent to lull suspicion while the cattle were being looted. Two regiments were sent to recover the animals. A fight took place, in which the BaMabodisa were defeated, and their cattle were taken, as well as those which had been looted. Senwêlô managed to escape, however, and found refuge with his mother's people at Madibana village. Letsêbê was then installed as chief, and for a short while there was peace.

About this time Letsêbê received a call for help from the BaKwena. The latter had been severely defeated in battle by the BaNgwaketse, who had also captured most of their cattle. The BaKwena, poverty-stricken and desperate, appealed for aid to the BaKgatla, who were the "maternal relatives" of their chief (Motswasele II, son of Legvale). Letsêbê, pointing out that some of the BaKgatla were sure to be killed, asked what his tribe would receive in return. Motswasele replied that he had no cattle to give, but that if the BaKgatla successfully helped him he would assign to them part of his territory beyond the Marico River. Letsêbê agreed, and sent his own regiment (the Mafiri) under his half-brother and age-mate Pilane. They were led ahead by the BaKwena, who brought them to Segeng, in the country of the BaNgwaketse, where the looted cattle were kraaled in the midst of a dense thicket of thorn bush. The BaKgatla cut their way through the bush, and seized all the cattle. The BaNgwaketse pursued them, but were driven back, and Pilane took the cattle to the hillock of Mmopane, on the Metsemotlhaba River, where he handed them over to the BaKwena. It is said by the tribal historians that Motswasele now told the BaKgatla that the land stretching from Mmopane to Ramaselwana was theirs if they ever wanted it.

After this, Letsêbê initiated his younger brother Thari (of the Manôga regiment). He himself had all the time still been consorting with Nketso. Senwêlô, who greatly resented her abduction, at last persuaded a certain Mokgadi and several other men to kill Letsêbê. They went to Letsêbê's home, and when he came out of his hut to see them Mokgadi stabbed him to death. They cut off the tassels of his loinskin, to prove to Senwêlô that he was really dead. Letsêbê's adherents thereupon fled with Thari to the BaFokeng at Mmakgongwane.

Senwêlô was now asked to come back and rule the tribe once more. He moved the village from Mabule to Thokwane, another small hill near Saulspoor, where he was installed as chief. At the ceremony he was warned by one of the speakers that, in killing the chief, he had set a precedent from which he himself would suffer. The warning soon came true. Letsêbê's brothers organized

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1. Principal sources: As for Chapter I.

a plot to avenge his death, and sent some of their servants to Senwêlô's home to kill him. These men gave Senwêlô's guards beer to put them to sleep, and then set fire to the hut in which he was resting. Awakened by the heat and by the crackle of the burning timber, he rushed out and tried to escape over the fence at the back, but his foot slipped, and he was impaled on the poles. He managed to get away and crawl to Mabodisa village, where, according to one version, he died soon afterwards of his wound (c.1820?). Others say that the Mabodisa people reported his presence among them to the chief's village, and in reply were pointedly told to "cure" him -- an instruction which they interpreted correctly by administering poison to him.

Thari, Letsêbê's younger brother in the same house, should now have become chief, but as he was still a young man his grandmother, Mma-Pheto, decided that one of Molefê's sons from an inferior house should be appointed as regent. The choice fell on Motlotle, who, because he was quiet and even dull-witted, did not seem likely to give any trouble, especially as he was somewhat remote from the line of succession.

But Motlotle was at heart a real savage, and after he became acting chief he proved even worse and more cruel than had been feared of his seniors. He began killing all the brothers and nephews who stood between him and the chieftainship, and he killed also the headmen who opposed him. Kgosi and Molefi, sons of Molefê, managed to flee with their people to the BaTlhako, but several of the others were slain. It is said that Motlotle would have his victims brought to the yard at the back of his hut, which was surrounded by a fence of very sharp stakes, and here he killed them by cutting out their navels and leaving them to bleed to death. "One after the other he killed in this way", say the tribal historians, "and he did not even bury them, but threw their bodies into a pit from which the women used to dig earth".

Pilane all this time was at his cattlepost, with his half-brother Kgotlamaswê. He did not know what was going on at home, and it was only by good fortune that he escaped with his life. According to one version, Motlotle called him home in order to kill him in the same way as the others. But when he entered Motlotle's homestead, he heard someone screaming at the back; he turned to flee, and as he ran out Motlotle's servant Thokwe, who was guarding the entrance, cut at him with an axe and wounded him in the thigh. He managed, however, to get away into the woods, and no one knew where he went. According to another version, Motlotle sent a man named Mhalapitsa to kill Pilane at the cattlepost. Mhalapitsa and his companions, when they came there, told Pilane that they had been sent by the chief to inspect the cattle. As they walked about the kraals, Pilane noticed that Mhalapitsa was always edging closer and closer to him. This made him wary. Mhalapitsa, when at last he got close enough, drew out a short axe from under his cloak, and struck at Pilane. The latter, being alert, was merely grazed on the thigh, and immediately fled, accompanied by Kgotlamaswê. They made their way to the BaTlhako, where they found the others who had escaped from Motlotle, and learned from them what had been happening at home.

While Pilane and his brothers were with the BaTlhako, Motlotle sent inviting them to come back. They refused, although he promised that no harm would befall them. He then asked Maoto (head of the BaRokologadi) to intervene on his behalf. Not realizing that Motlotle was planning treachery, Maoto persuaded Thari and some others to return, but Pilane still refused. Maoto, when the party reached his village, sent ahead to inform Motlotle that they were coming. Motlotle thereupon sent men to lie in wait for them at Letswaaneng and at Lesele. Next day, when Thari's party came to Letswaaneng (the site of the present town of Rustenburg), the ambush fell upon them, and many were killed. Thari, with his half-brother Segale and a man named Kgaswe, succeeded in escaping, but they were pursued, and when they came to the kloof of Molapofike Thari was too exhausted to go any further. Segale and Kgaswe tried to fight a way out for him, but, finding it impossible, they left him behind while they escaped; and on looking back

/they

they saw a man named Rampokane stab him to death with a spear. They hid on the banks of an adjacent stream until evening, and then got away safely.

The tribe now began to scatter from Motlotle, resenting his savage rule, and he soon found himself with very few followers. Then, in 1823, shortly after all these events, there came the "LbLegogwane" (the BaFokeng of Sebetwane), who were fighting a way to the north and destroying all the tribes in their path. The BaKgatla, because of their domestic troubles, scattered and fled before Sebetwane's people, without attempting to resist. Motlotle himself and a single follower, Dikobe Rakgonetse, fled to the west. They crossed the Marico and came to a hill named Phoko, close to Tshwene-Tshwene, where they entered a small village of MaKgagadi. Some Kgatla refugees who happened to be there recognized Motlotle, and plotted with the MaKgagadi to kill him. When he left the village, making for Tshwene-Tshwene, they went ahead of him by a different path, ambushed him, and beat him to death with sticks. He was buried beneath a mounō tree, and stones were piled over his grave, which is said to be still visible to-day. Dikobe managed to escape.

Meanwhile some of the BaKgatla had fled farther west to the BaKwena, thinking that they would be well received because of the way in which they had formerly treated Legwale when he was a captive in their midst. But the BaKwena, who were now ruled by Moruekgomo, were still smarting under the many losses they had suffered in that war, and, after receiving the refugees kindly, plotted to kill them. They invited the BaKgatla to a "cattle-kraal meeting"¹, saying that no weapons should be brought, but they themselves concealed short/stabbing-spears under their cloaks. Some of the BaKgatla, who suspected trouble or had been warned by their friends, did the same. Moruekgomo addressed the meeting, and concluded with the words: "I have finished". At this pre-arranged signal the BaKwena fell upon the BaKgatla. Those BaKgatla who were armed fought to defend themselves, and a general mêlée ensued. The BaKgatla, unable to escape through the thick fence of the kraal, made for the entrance; many were killed there, but some got away, including the royal headmen Molefi and Segale. The latter with his followers escaped to the BaNgwato in the north. Molefi and the others fled east. The BaKwena followed them up, but some of the pursuers were killed, and the rest then retired. The fugitives went on until they came to a pan called Sediba-sa-ditlou (near Modipe in the present Kgatla Reserve), and here they found Pilane.

III. THE RESTORATION OF TRIBAL UNITY²

Pilane, after the return of his relatives to Motlotle, had left the BaTlhako and gone off into the veld. None of the other BaKgatla knew where he was. He roamed about alone for a while, and then, concealing the fact that he was the son of a chief, he became the servant of a Kwena hunter named Ngwako Sekgotlêla. They dug pitfalls for game all along the Marico River, until they came to Sikwane, whence they worked westwards to the pan Sediba-sa-ditlou. Here, as already mentioned, Pilane was found by the BaKgatla who had escaped from the BaKwena. One of the fugitives, an old woman named LinaMojedife, recognized him and revealed his identity to the other BaKgatla. They told Pilane that some of their people were living at Letlheleng (Ganskuil) with a famous hunter named Magomeng, upon whom they depended for food; and they asked him to accompany them there as their chief, since he was the senior surviving son of Pheto. (His mother's house was the second in rank.) He told them to go ahead, letting no one know that they had found him, and said that he would

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1. Phuthôgô ya lesaka, an important secret meeting held inside the cattle-kraal adjoining the knotla (council-place).

2. Principal sources: Schapera, ut cit.; and The Diary of Dr. Andrew Smith 1834-1836 (ed. P.R. Kirby, Cape Town 1939-40).

follow them as soon as he could. On reaching Letlhakeng, he received a great welcome from his people, and he began to rule over them as chief, building his village near by at Monamaneng.

Many BaKgatla were at this time roaming about in the veld, living like Bushmen upon game and wild vegetable foods, for they had lost their cattle. Gradually the news of Pilane's return spread, and the people came to join him at Monamaneng. Before this he had already married his first wife, Mankube, daughter of the Tlôkwa chief Bogatswe; and he now also married Morelle, daughter of Magomeng, to whom he had been betrothed before his flight from Motlotle. Afterwards he moved his village to Bogopana, near Witfontein, and thence again to Mmamodimokwana, on the Crocodile River.

Under Pilane, the BaKgatla once more became a united tribe. Their villages were scattered among the mountains which the Boers subsequently named Pilansbergen, after him; and the people again acquired cattle and cultivated the soil. They were visited periodically by the Griquas and other half-breeds from south of the Vaal River, who hunted in their country and traded with them for ivory.¹

But fresh trouble soon broke upon the tribe. In 1825 the MaTebele, under Moselekatse, had entered the western Transvaal. They ravaged the country wherever they went, destroying all the tribes who opposed them, and levying tribute from the others. The BaKgatla, still too weak to make any forcible resistance, submitted to their domination, and paid them tribute in skins, corn, and ivory. Pilane, resenting the servitude to which he was reduced, appealed for help to the Griqua leader Barend Barend, holding out the hope of plunder as a bait. The Griquas responded to his call, and in 1831 sent a commando against the MaTebele. They successfully raided several large cattleposts, but on their way back failed to guard against counter-attack, with the result that they were suddenly overwhelmed by a Tebele force sent to recover the cattle, and almost all of them were killed.² The MaTebele then raided the BaKgatla, destroying their villages, taking away all their cattle, and incorporating many of the young men into their army. Pilane sought safety in flight, and made his way to the bakaLaka of chief Mapela in the Zoutpansberg.

Among the BaKgatla remaining behind was Molefi, a half-brother of Pilane's father Photo. He had become very friendly with the MaTebele, who trusted him, and he gradually collected together the scattered BaKgatla and ruled over them. He then went to the bakaLaka to call Pilane back home. On their return they found that Kgotlamaswê, Pilane's brother in the third house, had taken over the chieftainship. He refused to surrender it to Pilane, saying that it was he who had gathered the people together. Pilane and Molefi thereupon attacked him and drove him away. He went with his followers to Motsile, close to Mabieskraal, where he ruled as an independent chieftain until after the death of Pilane.

After the expulsion of Kgotlamaswê, Pilane for a short time remained untroubled by the MaTebele, who even gave him some of their cattle to herd. His men, however, slaughtered a few of the animals. Learning that Moselekatse intended in consequence to have him killed, he once again fled for safety to the bakaLaka (c.1835), leaving Molefi in charge of the tribe.

The Tebele domination over the BaKgatla and other tribes in the western Transvaal did not last very long after this. It coincided with the arrival of the first Europeans in the country. Moselekatse was visited in 1829 by the

/missionary

1. Smith's Diary, vol. i, p. 382.

2. Smith's Diary, vol. i, pp. 381-4 and passim (cf. index, s.v. "Barend Barend").

missionary Robert Moffat, and in succeeding years by various other missionaries, traders, and hunters. In 1836 large parties of Voortrekkers, Boer emigrants from the Cape Colony, began making their way into the fertile plains north of the Orange River. Some of them were set upon and massacred by the MaTebele. The survivors banded together and, reinforced by fresh arrivals, defeated Moselekatse's armies first at Mosega (February 1837) and then at the Marico River (November 1837). Finding them too powerful an enemy, and troubled also by attacks in the same year from Dingane's Zulu, Moselekatse withdrew with his people into north-eastern Bechuanaland, beyond the Crocodile River, whence he ultimately made his way into what is now Southern Rhodesia.

The MaTebele having withdrawn, Pilane returned home and took over the chieftainship from Molefi. He built his village at Mmasebudule (Rhenosterfontein) on the Bland's River. His only assistant of the royal family was Molefi, for all the other brothers and sons of Pheto had either been killed or were scattered. In 1842 the BaKgatla were raided by a party of MaTebele from the north. Three of Pilane's sons (Kgmanyane, Mantirisi, and Moselekatse) were captured, but Molefi was able to secure their release, owing to the high esteem in which he was held by the MaTebele. After this Pilane was not troubled again by Moselekatse's impis. Nor did he himself engage in any wars with other Native tribes. According to local tradition, however, he played the role of peacemaker on three different occasions: he sent a force to restore Mokgatle to the chieftainship of the BaFokeng; he supported the claims of Ntuanne to the chieftainship of the BaTlhako; and he is also said to have sent the Manoga regiment, under Molatlhegi Dikobe, to install Montshiwa as chief of the BaRolong-booRaTshidi. This was probably the last important event of his reign, for he died shortly afterwards, in 1850 or 1851.

IV. THE IMPACT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Pilane was succeeded by Kgmanyane, the eldest son of his first wife (Mankube). Some of the tribe had previously objected to Mankube's ranking as great wife, since Pilane was first betrothed to Morelle, who according to law should therefore have taken precedence; but he replied that Mankube had been with him in all his early hardships and wanderings, and thereby had earned the status he gave her. Morelle was killed by the MaTebele after Pilane fled to the bagalaka. Since she had borne him no sons, Pilane when he returned sent to her people for a seantlo (substitute), and was given Mantshelana, who became the mother of Tau and Kobane. Pilane gave this woman the rank of second wife, an act which met with opposition from his other wives, who said that as he had not wanted to make Morelle his great wife, her substitute should now rank after all his other houses. The mother of Tshomankane (nominally the third wife in rank) was therefore regarded by some as being of the second house. This question of status, as we shall see, subsequently led to some controversy regarding the succession to the chieftainship.

Kgmanyane's rule was from the beginning troubled by disputes with his many brothers, some of whom he soon antagonized by his quick temper and autocratic tendencies. He quarrelled with Tshomankane about the inheritance of cattle from Pilane's estate, with the ultimate result that Tshomankane seceded from the tribe with a large following and established himself at Bopitiko as an independent chieftain. Some time afterwards, when Kgmanyane was already at Saulspoot (Moruleng, to which he moved in 1861), his brother Letsöbô (of the fifth house) also left him with many followers, and, after living for a while at Molorwe (Janskop), crossed the Marico River and joined Sechele's BaKwena at Dithebyane.

/Kgmanyane's

1. According to H.N.T.T. (p. 28) some of Kgmanyane's other brothers left him in 1864, and settled on farms in the Heidelberg District. I did not get any information about this secession from the tribal historians.

Kgamanyane's troubles were greatly increased by his dealings with the Boers. The departure of the MaTebela in 1837-38 had removed the only powerful Native tribe in the western Transvaal, which the Boers began to occupy with but little opposition from the peoples weakened and scattered by Moselekatshe's impis. In 1839 they founded a village called Magaliesberg (afterwards renamed Rustenburg) not far from where the BaKgatla were living. By 1852, when the independence of the Boers beyond the Vaal River was formally recognized by the British at the Sand River Convention, there were already some 20,000 of them in the country, organized into several small republics which subsequently amalgamated to form the South African Republic.

The Boers, dissatisfied with British rule in the Cape Colony, had trekked away in search of independence, and they carried into their new homes the repressive principles of Native administration which, among other things, they felt had been betrayed in the Cape. They claimed that all the Natives in the country north of the Vaal River were their subjects, and consequently liable to labour taxation. The BaKgatla, like many others, were forced to provide men and women to work on the Boer farms.¹ The Boers also employed the BaKgatla as auxiliaries in their wars with other Native tribes: in Kgamanyane's mabókô (praises), lengthy reference is made to the help he gave the Boers when they fought against the BagaMokopana (1854) and the BaSotho of Moshesh (1865). (He himself fought two inter-tribal wars, against the BagaKeledi and the BagaMiatlha, but they seem to have been comparatively petty affairs.)

The Boers further divided the country up into huge farms for themselves, paying little regard to the rights of the local Native tribes. In 1904 the BaKgatla told Sir Godfrey Lagden (Land Commissioner of the Transvaal) that Kgamanyane had been advised by Paul Kruger (then field-cornet of the Rustenburg District) to purchase the land on which the tribe lived, and that he and his people had on two different occasions handed over cattle for this purpose: only to be informed subsequently that the payments would be regarded as rent, since President Pretorius had decided against allowing Natives to hold land; and the ground in question was eventually parcelled out among various European owners.² It is at any rate certain that when, in 1864, the Rev. H. Gonin of the Dutch Reformed Church came to settle among the BaKgatla as their first missionary, he and Kgamanyane between them had to purchase, "for an appreciable sum", the land at Saulspoot, where he established his Mission.³

These oppressive measures, and particularly the continual Boer demands for labour, greatly disturbed the BaKgatla. The climax came in 1869, when Paul Kruger flogged Kgamanyane in the presence of the tribe for not providing enough men to work on the farms. Humiliated and angered by the insult, the chief decided to withdraw from the rule of the Boers into a country where he could be independent. The BaKwena in Bechuanaland, hearing of his difficulties, had already invited him on several occasions to enter their territory, reminding him of the time when the BaKgatla had helped them against the BaNgwaketse at Segeng and received in return a promise of land. Kgamanyane now decided to take advantage of the offer. In August 1869, therefore, he suddenly left Saulspoot with the main body of his tribe. Tradition has it that his brother Kgari, a noted rainmaker, produced a series of downpours which completely wiped out the tracks of the fugitives and thus prevented the

/Boers

1. Until very recently men were still living among the BaKgatla who claimed to have been inspanned to draw Boer wagons through tracts infested with tsetse fly and therefore inaccessible to cattle.

2. Report ... relating to the Acquisition and Tenure of Land by Natives in the Transvaal (Pretoria 1904), p. 27; cf. also Appendix D below, no. (b), p. 32.

3. J.H. Neethling, in *De Kerkbode*, vol. xxiii (1871), p. 408.

Boers from following them up. It is certain, at least, that the BaKgatla were allowed to depart without being molested. Tshomankane and his people remained behind, however, as did the few Christian members of Kgamanyane's own section.¹

The emigrant BaKgatla camped for a year or so at Tshwene-Tshwene, a hill near Melorane. Then, early in 1871, they crossed over into what was then the territory of the BaKwena. Sechele, the Kwena chief, had wanted them to settle at Sengarule, near his own village of Molepolole. But Kgamanyane, remembering the time when the BaKwena under Moruakgomo had treacherously massacred the Kgatla refugees in their midst, politely refused, saying that he feared trouble might result over grazing rights if the two peoples lived too close together. He therefore established his village at Mochudi (Motshodi), on the banks of the Ngotwane River, some fifty miles from Molepolole. Here he was soon afterwards joined by the Rev. P. Brink, of the Dutch Reformed Church, which since that time has been working among the BaKgatla in both Bechuanaland and the Transvaal. Some of Letsêbê's BaKgatla, who were already at Molepolole, also returned to join Kgamanyane, but Letsêbê himself and his immediate dependants remained behind for the time being.

The relationship between the BaKgatla and the BaKwena was not at first clearly defined. But Sechele seems to have heard that the Boers still claimed the BaKgatla as their subjects, and consequently regarded the land they occupied as part of the Republic's territory. Anxious to keep as much of his territory as he could, he sent a message to the BaKgatla demanding tribute, or some other sort of acknowledgment that the ground was his. Some say that the BaKgatla agreed to this, and others that they did not. However, the tribute was not paid, and, according to the BaKwena, the BaKgatla also began interfering with their cattleposts and servants along the Marico and Ngotwane Rivers. When Kgamanyane died in 1874, it was already obvious that there would soon be war. Accordingly, he was not buried in Mochudi; his body was carried by wagon back into the Transvaal and buried near the site of his old village at Mmassebudule (Rhenosterfontein). This was done to prevent the BaKwena, should they attack and capture Mochudi, from being able to desecrate the chief's grave and use his remains to bewitch the BaKgatla.

Kgamanyane during his lifetime had married some thirty wives, by whom he had very many sons. (An admittedly incomplete list compiled for me at Mochudi gave the names of forty-eight.) His first wife in actual order of marriage was Nkomeng, the mother of Maganêlô and Segale; but he had previously been betrothed to Dikolo, who was accordingly held to be the great wife. She was the mother of Lentswe and Ramono, and on Kgamanyane's death Lentswe succeeded him. Some people thought that Tau, Pilane's son by Morelle's seantlo,² should have become chief instead, a right to which he had a good claim in Tswana law; but the majority were against this, saying that Pilane had never regarded Tau as his heir. Lentswe was therefore duly installed as chief without any serious trouble. He was then about eighteen or nineteen years old, having just been initiated into membership of his regiment (the Matlakana), but he was helped in his duties as chief by his uncle Bogatswe, Kgamanyane's brother in the same house.

The threatened invasion by the BaKwena took place soon after Lentswe's accession. In 1875 Sechele sent his son Sebele with a large force to attack Mochudi and drive the BaKgatla out of the country. The BaKgatla, warned of their coming, were ready. The BaKwena attacked at dawn, on the eastern side of Mochudi. They beat back the opponents facing them, burned many huts, and penetrated to the heart of the village. Meanwhile, however, a party of BaKgatla

/had

1. There are several other versions of the circumstances leading to the departure of the BaKgatla from the Transvaal. Some of the relevant documents are quoted below in Appendix D, pp. 32 ff.

2. Cf. above, p. 9.

had gone round the hills to the north, and they suddenly fell upon the BaKwena from the rear. Caught between two fires, the BaKwena suffered heavily, and ultimately fled, leaving behind between 90 and 100 dead warriors. Sebele himself fled ignominiously on horseback far ahead of his men, for which he was ever after branded as a coward, even by his own people.

The BaKwena, smarting under their defeat, now began raiding Kgatla cattleposts and fields, killing the people there and committing various atrocities. The BaKgatla retaliated in kind. But this did not satisfy Lentswe. In June 1876 he set out against the BaKwena with five of his own regiments and a reinforcement of Matlapeng's BaTlökwa. They successfully raided the cattleposts beyond Molepolole, killing sixteen herdsmen and looting all the cattle. On their way back, however, they passed close to Molepolole itself, and the BaKwena rushed out upon them in force. Hampered by the cattle they were driving, the BaKgatla were soon forced to flee; they were pursued, and some forty of them were killed, and all the cattle were re-taken. After this the war resolved itself into a series of raids by either side on the fields and cattleposts of the other.¹

This was the position when, in October 1876, Sechele was visited by Mr. A. Bailie, whom the Griqualand West Administration had sent into Bechuana-land to arrange for a supply of Native labour for the diamond mines at Kimberley. Bailie reported that both tribes had suffered greatly from the war; there had been hardly any harvest for two years, and the concentration of people and cattle in and around the main villages had almost exhausted the available waters and pastures. Sechele authorized Bailie to negotiate an armistice on his behalf with Lentswe: the BaKgatla were to acknowledge that the country they were occupying belonged to the BaKwena, and both tribes were to agree that no further acts of hostility should take place until a conference had been held between the two chiefs and Bailie himself, or some other approved official of the British Government. Lentswe, through his uncle Bogatswe, accepted these terms, and for a short time afterwards there was no further fighting.²

In 1877 the South African Republic was annexed by Great Britain. A copy of Bailie's report was sent to the new Administrator, Sir T. Shepstone, but no immediate action was taken upon it in regard to the relations between the BaKgatla and the BaKwena. Sechele, however, had followed up Bailie's visit by sending two men with his missionary (Mr. J.S. Moffat) to ask Lentswe for peace. Lentswe replied that he could not trust the BaKwena at once, but that he would communicate with them later on if he saw that they really intended to refrain from further fighting. In May 1878, however, he received a new declaration of war from Sechele. His missionary (Mr. Brink) at once reported the matter on his behalf to the Transvaal Administration, which thereupon warned Sechele of the "serious responsibilities" that he would incur by attacking a people "residing within the Transvaal". Sechele replied that he considered Lentswe to be living within Kwena territory, and not in the Transvaal, but he requested the Administration to send someone to settle the boundary question, and to inquire into the merits of the dispute between him and the BaKgatla. He promised not to attack the BaKgatla in the meantime, provided that they did not interfere with his people, cattleposts, or waters. The Administration wrote back to him (July 29) that it would send two officials to investigate the whole matter.

/On

1. For some contemporary accounts of the war between the two tribes, cf. Appendix E below, pp. 33 ff.

2. British Bluebook C.2220 (1879), pp. 50, 52, 53, 76; cf. Appendix E below, where the relevant passages are quoted in full (pp. 33 f.).

On August 31, however, Sechele informed the Administration that he would fight the BaKgatla unless they were removed. Two days later Lentswe also wrote, reporting that Sechele had looted his cattle and had attacked him at Mochudi on the 19th. According to Native accounts, the BaKwena lined the ridges north of the village, and fired down into the streets, but the BaKgatla began to encircle them, and when they observed this they fled once more, without having done much damage. In view of Sechele's action, the Administration felt that no good purpose would be served in holding the inquiry it had proposed. Sechele, however, represented that he had acted in self-defence, and implored the Administration not to abandon the inquiry.

It was not until 1880 that the Commission of Inquiry was finally appointed. In the meantime, fighting had again been resumed. For the most part it consisted of the usual small raids on cattlepost areas, which kept both sides in a state of acute tension, without greatly benefiting either. On one occasion, however, Lentswe went with a considerable force to near Gabane, south-east of Molepolole, and plundered many cattleposts. He sent one of his regiments back with the animals and used the others to guard their rear. The pursuing BaKwena killed many BaKgatla, including Magašilo (Kgamanyane's eldest son), but their own losses were more severe, and they failed to recover any of the looted cattle.

At the end of April 1880, Mr. T. Melville, on behalf of the Transvaal Administration, met representatives of the BaKwena, BaKgatla, BaNgwaketse, BaTlokwa, and BaSekakele, on the banks of the Metsemashuana River. His primary concern was to fix the boundary between the Transvaal and the Bechuanaland tribes. By his settlement, the greater part of the country occupied by the BaKgatla was awarded to the BaKwena, the rest falling within the Transvaal. Lentswe was offered the choice between removing all his people into the Transvaal and becoming a British subject, or remaining where he was and submitting to the paramountcy of Sechele. He refused to commit himself definitely to either alternative, and the feud between him and the BaKwena persisted.

Then, in 1881, the Transvaal was handed back to the Boers. Montshiwa, chief of the BaRolong at Mafeking, was greatly alarmed by this step, and by the troubles in which he at once found himself involved with European filibusters who entered his country. In 1883 he visited the chiefs to the north and west, trying to unite them against their common enemy. As a result of his intervention, the war between the BaKgatla and the BaKwena at last came to an end, although no decisive result had been reached other than that the BaKgatla remained in possession of the land that they had occupied. Sechele for some time afterwards continued to regard them as his subjects, and so did the various European authorities who were now beginning to take an active interest in the affairs of the Bechuanaland tribes. The BaKgatla, on the hand, steadily maintained that they were independent, claiming that they had established by force their right to the land they held.³

/V. THE

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1. British Bluebook C.2320 (1879), pp. 129 ff., 257 ff., 311 ff.
 2. A copy of extracts from Melville's report (which does not seem to have been published) is given in Appendix E below, pp. 34-37.
 3. Some of the documents bearing on this point are given below in Appendix E, pp. 33 ff.

V. THE EARLY DAYS OF THE BRITISH PROTECTORATE

During the years 1882-84 the activities of European filibusters in southern Bechuanaland led to the intervention of the British Government, which in May 1884 proclaimed a Protectorate over the country south of the Molopo. Friction persisted, however, with the result that Sir Charles Warren was sent out from England with a strong expeditionary force to restore law and order, and the Protectorate was extended as far north as 22° S. lat. (March 1885). Later in the same year, Warren visited the chiefs of the BaNgwaketse, BaKwena, and BaNgwato, in order to inform them officially about the extension of the Protectorate over their tribes. On his way to Shoshong (the principal settlement of the BaNgwato), he passed through Mochudi. Lentswe was apparently apprehensive of what would be said about his relations with Sechele, but Warren, "beyond expressing friendliness on the part of the Queen's Government, and the wish that peace might be established on a permanent basis, ... felt that it would be entirely out of place to enter into the consideration of such questions."¹

The BaKgatla, nevertheless, were officially still considered Sechele's subjects, for in the map accompanying Warren's report their territory is included within that of the BaKwena. Moreover, the land that Sechele offered to surrender to the Crown for settlement by Europeans consisted of the region between the Ngotwane and Marico Rivers where the BaKgatla were living.² However, the offer was not taken up, and for the moment, therefore, the BaKgatla were left undisturbed.

But in March 1888 a Government Notice was issued which laid down that in future no concessions granted by a chief would be regarded as valid by the Administration unless they complied with certain prescribed conditions. It was also stated in the Notice that the only chiefs entitled to grant concessions were Sechele (BaKwena), Gascitsiwe (BaNgwaketse), and Kgama (BaNgwato), and that grants made by Ikaneng (BaMale^{tc}) and Lentswe (BaKgatla) would be invalid unless "ratified and confirmed" by Gascitsiwe and Sechele respectively.³ This proviso was inserted because Ikaneng had given some Boers a mineral concession over the country he occupied (and which was claimed by the BaNgwaketse), while Lentswe had refused to admit into his territory a European to whom Sechele had granted permission to prospect there for gold. Sechele complained to the Administration, and renewed his demand that Lentswe should acknowledge him as paramount. Lentswe, on being approached, refused emphatically to acknowledge Sechele, or to allow white men, sent by that chief, to prospect in his country: he said that he had won the land by force of arms, and that if again attacked he would defend himself. The question of paramountcy remained unsettled for the time being, as far as the Administration was concerned, but a compromise was reached in regard to concessions, by which grants made by Sechele in respect of the country occupied by the BaKgatla would have to be sanctioned also by Lentswe.⁴

Hitherto the British authorities had done little to administer the Protectorate north of the Molopo, apart from sending out an occasional police patrol. However, in February 1889, the Administrator (Sir S. Shippard) met the various chiefs at Kopong, in order to discuss with them certain proposed

/innovations

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1. J. Mackenzie, Austral Africa (London 1887), vol. ii, pp. 243 f.
 2. British Bluebook C.4588 (1885), p. 47, and map facing p. 30.
 3. British Bechuanaland Proclamations ... 1885-89 (Vryburg 1890), pp. 127 ff.
 4. Administrator of British Bechuanaland to High Commissioner, April 13, 1888. No. 79 G. (Archives, H.C.'s office, Cape Town.)

innovations, including the payment of hut tax by all adult tribesmen. This particular proposal met with marked opposition from most of the chiefs, including Lentswe, and the meeting broke up in confusion.

Then, towards the middle of 1890, Mr. W.H. Surmon was appointed Assistant Commissioner for the Territory, with headquarters at Gaberones. His duties were entirely administrative, there being as yet no European laws in force. But it is noteworthy that, in matters affecting the BaKgatla, he dealt directly with Lentswe, and not through Sechele. A good instance was provided in the same year, when the telegraph line to the north was being constructed. Lentswe had objected to the line passing through his land, and when, in spite of his wishes, it was brought to Mochudi, his people interfered with the work. An inquiry held by Mr. Surmon showed that the trouble was due partly to the fact that survey poles and flags had been planted without any reference to Lentswe. The chief apologized for the disturbance, and promised not to interfere again with the work.¹ For some time afterwards, however, he was regarded as a firebrand, and suspected of being more sympathetic towards the Dutch in the Transvaal than towards the British authorities.

This reputation almost led to the inclusion of his country in the Transvaal. Late in 1890 the Republican Government of the Transvaal asked the High Commissioner to cede to them the land between the Marico and the Ngotwane inhabited by the BaKgatla; they pointed out that many BaKgatla were living in the Transvaal itself, and that it would be convenient to have the whole tribe subject to a single administration. The High Commissioner (Sir Henry Loch) favoured the request, particularly in view of Lentswe's recent conduct; he therefore suggested to the Colonial Office that the Transvaal Government be offered the land in exchange for an equal area in the Marico District (of the Transvaal). After meeting the southern chiefs at Crocodile Pools (November 1890), he changed his opinion, mainly because he now discovered that cession of the land in question would deprive the Protectorate of the waters of the Marico. The Transvaal authorities were accordingly informed that their proposal could not be entertained, and so Lentswe and his people remained under British protection.²

In May 1891 statutory provision was at last made for the effective administration of the Protectorate and for the establishment of European courts within it. Lentswe's first important experience of the new order came in 1894. For some years past there had been a boundary dispute between the BaKwena and the BaNgwato. Lentswe now intervened. He maintained that part of the land claimed by the BaKwena in the disputed area was his by right of conquest; and, in order to establish his pretensions, he sent two armed regiments there to cut poles, dig pits, and select sites for outposts. This action so provoked Kgama (the Ngwato chief) that he wished to expel the BaKgatla by force. The administration intervened, and it was arranged to have the dispute settled by arbitration. A Commission, presided over by Shippard, sat at Lokgalo (October 1894), and, after hearing evidence by the chiefs and other representatives of the three tribes, defined a line to be recognized by all as Kgama's southern boundary. Lentswe protested vigorously against the award, but was informed that it was final and could not be altered.³ For many years afterwards, however, he continued to feel aggrieved about the matter, maintaining that he had been unjustly deprived of land to which he was entitled.

A more important issue soon arose to occupy his attention. About the middle of 1895 it became generally known that negotiations were afoot for transferring the administration of the Protectorate to the British South Africa Company. The

/BaKgatla

1. White Book 392 (1890), pp. 296 ff., 300 f., 303-326 ff.

2. White Books 392 (1890), pp. 345 ff., 371; 403 (1891), pp. 24, 234.

3. British Bechuanaland Annual Reports for 1894-5 (C.7944; 1896), pp. 52 f., 55; cf. Appendix E below, no. 4 (pp. 39 f.).

BaKgatla, like almost all the other tribes, at once protested that they wished to remain directly under the Queen.¹ Kgama, Sebele, and Bathoefi (chiefs of the BaNgwato, BaKwena, and BaNgwaketse), went to England to plead their cause in person; they succeeded in securing their independence of the proposed transfer, and undertook in return to pay hut tax and to surrender to the Crown certain lands for railway and other purposes. The Company had meanwhile been authorized to negotiate directly with the other tribes. It persuaded the BaBolong and the Bagamalete to accept the change, and a Proclamation was issued (October 1895) putting them under its immediate jurisdiction. Negotiations with the same object were still being carried on with the BaKgatla when, at the very end of December (1895), the Company's representative in Bechuanaland (Dr. L.S. Jameson) invaded the Transvaal with an armed force. This unauthorized act and its serious political consequences led the British Government to resume the administration of the areas already transferred to the Company, and nothing more was said about the proposed transfer of the BaKgatla.

The negotiations between the British Government, the B.S.A. Company, and the chiefs who went to England, had one very important consequence for the BaKgatla. The local Government officers had by this time decided that Sebele's claim to paramountcy over Lentswe could not be recognized, for the BaKwena had in fact never been able to exercise authority over the BaKgatla. Sebele, while in England, was therefore told that in the pending demarcation of boundaries, necessitated by the land settlements, a line would be defined separating his territory from that of the BaKgatla. On his return to South Africa, he protested that he had not agreed to any such arrangement by which the BaKgatla would be officially recognized as independent of his rule. His protest was ignored, and in May 1896 Mr. A.H. St. Quintin formally defined the respective territories of the two tribes, trying, as far as possible, to separate the land actually occupied by the BaKgatla from the land actually occupied by the BaKwena. The territory of the BaKgatla, as defined by him, corresponded approximately to the present Kgatla Reserve. Lentswe maintained that he had not been given all the land to which he was entitled, but he agreed, "for the sake of peace and quietness", to accept the award as it stood. But Sebele was thoroughly dissatisfied, and repeatedly protested both to the local authorities and to the Colonial Office. He was told in reply that the matter was closed.² Since then the BaKgatla have been looked upon by the Administration as an independent tribe of the same standing as the BaKwena.

As part of the new settlement, Lentswe, like other chiefs, granted to the Bechuanaland Railway Company a narrow strip of land passing right through his territory. On this part of the railway line to Southern Rhodesia was built in 1896-97. In October 1897 the High Commissioner (Lord Milner) visited Mochudi on his way to open the railway at Bulawayo. In his official report on the trip he wrote as follows about Lentswe:³

"Lentswe made a particularly good impression on me. He is apparently far superior, both in vigour and intelligence, to either Bathoefi or Sebele, and he seems to have his tribe, who are reputed to be the best fighting men of all the Bechuanas, well in hand. I am told, too, that in the construction of the railway, Lentswe's people rendered better service than any of the other tribes. The chief, at first, was extremely suspicious of the railway, and unwilling to have anything to do with it. But when he had once agreed to help, he threw himself vigorously into the business, both working himself

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1. British Bluebook C.7962 (1896), pp. 5 f., 7 f.

2. White Books 517 (1898), pp. 125, 130, 177-83; 522 (1898), pp. 128-30.

3. White Book 552 (1898), p. 211.

and keeping his people up to the mark. In other respects, too, he is well-spoken of both by the officials and the missionaries. He is not only very strongly opposed to the introduction of liquor among his people, but, unlike some of the other chiefs, he is free from any suspicion of drinking himself. Two other points ought perhaps to be mentioned with respect to him. He is extremely jealous of any interference with his authority within his own tribe, and his fear and dislike of the Chartered Company are at least as great, if not greater than those of any chief in the Protectorate. I dwell on these matters more particularly, because I fancy that both the character and the attitude of Linchwe were not by any means fully appreciated at home at the time of the abortive negotiations for the transfer of the Protectorate in 1895. If they had been, I am sure it would have been recognized to be both unjust and impolitic to treat him differently from Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen."

In March 1899, a Proclamation was issued formally establishing and defining the boundaries of tribal Reserves within the Protectorate. By this Proclamation (No. 9 of 1899), the BaKgatla were finally confirmed in the ownership of the land they had wrested from the BaKwena. Almost immediately afterwards another Proclamation (No. 10 of 1899) was issued, imposing an annual hut tax of 10s. upon every adult Native in the Protectorate. The payment of this tax had been one of the conditions laid down by the Secretary of State in his settlement of November 1895 with Kgama, Sebele, and Bathoen; but its imposition had been delayed, owing to the havoc wrought by the rinderpest epidemic in 1896 and to the serious crop failures of the succeeding two years.¹ Lentswe, like all the other chiefs, now accepted the tax without demur, and did his best to see that it was duly paid by his people. So zealous, indeed, did he show himself in collecting it that, in August 1899, a party of his men interfered with and molested some Natives working on the railway line near Artesia. An alarming telegram from the railway ganger to the effect that the BaKgatla were on the warpath led to the immediate despatch to the scene of a special train with thirty armed police; but inquiry showed that the report had been greatly exaggerated. Lentswe, who gave every assistance with the inquiry, was warned that his messengers should not use force in collecting the tax; and there the matter ended.

Apart from these various instances of direct Administrative intervention, the early years of the Protectorate saw the introduction of other European influences into Kgatla life. In August 1890 Lentswe granted to Mr. Julius Weil a trading concession giving, in consideration of certain payments, "the sole right to trade, build, and carry on business free of any tax and duty, for 999 years, within 20 trading stations of one sq. mile each" The grant was refused by the Administration, on the grounds that it was in the nature of a trading monopoly and also contained an exemption from taxation. In 1893, however, a Concessions Commission sat at Gaberones, and, as Mr. Weil had already established stores at Palla, Mochudi, and Sikwane, the Commission recommended that

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1. A visitor to Mochudi in 1898 wrote as follows about the famine then prevailing: "We were in at least 50 houses. It was cooking time, towards sunset, and not in one house was there a pot of Kaffir corn or mealies on the fire. In most places, stuff like 'mest brede' (a kind of weed) was boiled up in water, roots and all -- not even salt put to it, and that eaten for the day's meal... In other places they were preparing the roots of the 'wit wortel' tree, that they boil in water and drink it like coffee. The roots they chew, but cannot swallow, as it makes them very sick. In other places they were glad enough to have skins to cook. These they cut into small pieces and boil and fry, some cook the skins, then scrape off the hair and make these into little round balls, and are glad enough to have that to eat. Some have died. Two old people, a man and a woman, were found dead in their house. No food or anything was there." (Miss M. Neethling, in The Mission News Letter, Wellington, Cape Province, January 1899, pp. 2 f.)

2. Report by Assistant Commissioner, Gaberones, about "Disturbance on Bechuana-land Railway at Mileage 1016, August, 1899". (Gaberones registry, S.P. 4668.)

he be granted a lease of two morgen of ground at each of these places for a period of 33 years. In return he was to pay the chief an annual stand rent of £10 for each site. This recommendation was approved by the Secretary of State. Lentswe had also granted Mr. Weil a prospecting and mining concession, which, after being suitably amended, was likewise approved.¹ The concession has not yet been exercised, but it has provided the Kgatla chiefs with a regular annual income of £100.

Another very important change took place in February 1892, when Lentswe became a Christian. As we have seen, the Dutch Reformed Church had established a Mission among the BaKgatla in 1864. For nearly thirty years it had laboured with but little success, making only a few converts and exercising no great effect on tribal life generally. With Lentswe's conversion, however, Christianity became in effect the official religion of the BaKgatla. Some of his brothers, notably Ramono and Segale, had already adopted the new faith, but the tribe as a whole was still against it; and it was only after a huge tribal meeting, where the matter was heatedly debated, that he succeeded in getting his way. Since he, as chief, was also the great tribal rainmaker and magician, he accelerated the decay of the old forms of ritual by the marked encouragement that he gave to Christianity, and by abolishing many ancient ceremonies for whose performance he was directly responsible. Thus, he did away with the old circumcision ceremonies, the Makuka regiment (formed c. 1901) being the last to undergo them; and he also prohibited the payment of *bogadi*, i.e. the transfer of cattle at marriage from the bridegroom's family to the bride's. At the time of his conversion he was married to three wives, but in accordance with the Church doctrine of monogamy he now put away two of them, although he continued to acknowledge their children as his. He retained only his first wife, Motlapela, the daughter of a local headman, and she was baptized on the same day as himself.

Lentswe not only joined the Dutch Reformed Church, but refused to let any other denomination work in his territory. About 1890 a group of Ba-Rokologadi from Melorane in the Transvaal had come to settle under him at Malolwane, along the Marico River. They belonged to the Lutheran Church, and their missionary wished to follow them and establish a station amongst them. Lentswe would not grant him the necessary permission, whereupon some of the people returned to Melorane. Those remaining behind were visited periodically by their missionary from Melorane, or went there to him to attend religious services. Lentswe objected even to this, and ultimately prohibited it altogether. Thereupon most of the Christians still at Malolwane returned to Melorane, and the rest joined the Dutch Reformed Church.²

During this period, too, the tribe was greatly enlarged by additions from outside. Some of the royal headmen who had broken away during Kganyane's rule, or who had remained behind in the Transvaal when he trekked into Bechuanaland, rejoined the main body after Lentswe's accession to the chieftainship, and established their villages at Sikwane and other places along the Marico River. Among them was Letsêbê, who had left Molepolole soon after the outbreak of war between the BaKgatla and the BaKwena. In 1895 about 2,000 more BaKgatla left the Transvaal, owing mainly to the hardships of the Squatters' Law (No. 21 of 1895), and some of them were settled in the new village of Morwa, eight miles west of Mochudi. About 1884, again, the tribe had been joined by a group of BaTlôkwa under Ramonnye (younger brother of chief Gaborone), who settled in Mochudi itself. In 1892 a small party of BagaMalete under Mokalake (younger brother of chief Ikaneng) founded a village at Modipane, and early in 1893 a large body of BaKaa, who had seceded from the BaKwena, settled at Tlhagakgama (BoKaa). In this way a number of small villages gradually came into being in the southern and western parts of the tribal territory.

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1. Report of the Concessions Commission 1893 (White Book 537; 1903), pp. 12 f.; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 31, 34, 66 f.

2. G. Hæccius, *Hannoversche Missionsgeschichte*, vol. iii, part 2 (Hermannsburg 1920), pp. 213 f.

VI. THE CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH RULE

In October 1899 war broke out between the British Government and the Boer Republics of South Africa (Transvaal and Orange Free State). Lentswe, in common with the other chiefs of the Protectorate, was told that he and his tribe were to take no part in the war, which was between white people only; but he was also instructed that if the Boers invaded his Reserve it would be his duty, as a loyal subject of the Queen, to assist in repelling the invasion. He was in a difficult position, for not only did he have several villages on the banks of the Marico River along the Transvaal border, but he also had to think of those BaKgatla who were still living at Saulspoort and other places in the Rustenburg District of the Transvaal. For a time, indeed, his loyalty seems to have been doubtful. But the course of events forced him to join in actively on the side of the British.

On October 25 (1899), the British evacuated Gaberones and retired to Mochudi railway station (about twelve miles north-west of the village). On the next day Lentswe was requested to turn out his men to resist any invasion of his Reserve, and ammunition was sent to him for the purpose. He returned the ammunition, saying that other chiefs in the Protectorate had allowed the Boers to pass without hindrance, and that he feared the Boers were too strong for him to face alone. On the 29th the British retired from Mochudi station to Mahalapye in the Ngwato Reserve. A Boer patrol then visited Mochudi village and Mochudi station, and looted the trading stores at both places. On November 8 the British reoccupied Mochudi station. Lentswe then explained to the Assistant Commissioner that he had hesitated to attack the Boers in the Reserve, partly because he had been told by the Government not to interfere in the war, and partly because he was too weak to fight alone against them; he had warned them several times not to come into his Reserve, but they had ignored him, and now, seeing that the British had returned from the north, he was ready to employ force to assist them drive out the Boers.

On November 23 Colonel Holdsworth with 100 mounted men reached Mochudi station from the north. It was decided to attack the Boer laager at Derdepoort, on the Transvaal border just opposite Sikwane. Lentswe was asked to send his men along to assist in repelling the Boers if the British were defeated and pursued. The Matlakana, Makoba, and Majanko, regiments were sent, under the command of Lentswe's brothers Ramono and Segale. When the troops got to Sikwane, early on the morning of the 25th, the BaKgatla were ordered to take up a position overlooking the laager on the Transvaal side of the border, while the British attacked from another angle. The British opened fire with a maxim, and almost immediately afterwards the BaKgatla began shooting too, and also burned several Boer dwellings in Derdepoort. Colonel Holdsworth thereupon drew off his troops, saying that the BaKgatla had attacked contrary to instructions, and he left them to extricate themselves as well as they could from the proximity of the laager. This they ultimately succeeded in doing, at the cost of 14 men killed and 16 wounded. The Boer losses are said to have been 20 killed and a number of others wounded. Among those killed, however, were two women. Seventeen other women and children were captured by the BaKgatla and handed over to the military authorities, by whom they were subsequently returned to their people.

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1. The following sketch of the part played by the BaKgatla in the Anglo-Boer War is based mainly upon (a) the official diary kept at the time by the Assistant Commissioner at Gaberones (Mr. J. Ellenberger); (b) the statements of many BaKgatla who actually took part in the fighting and in the various negotiations with the Boers and the British forces; and (c) the account given by Mr. Ellenberger in a short MS. entitled, "Notes on the history of the BaKgatla" (July 1937). I am indebted to Mr. V. Ellenberger for giving me free access to the papers mentioned. A selection of other documents dealing with the same topic is contained in Appendix F below (pp. 41 ff.).

This attack, and particularly the fact that during it women were killed, gave rise afterwards to many sensational stories of atrocities perpetrated by Natives at the instigation of the British.¹ The BaKgatla were greatly disheartened by what they considered their "desertion" by the British troops, and Lentswe was also afraid of reprisals by the Boers. These came in due course. On December 22, the Boers, strengthened by reinforcements from the north, attacked and burned Sikwane and the other villages along the Marico, whose inhabitants fled to Mochudi. The Boers also began destroying the crops growing in the fields, but ceased when Lentswe warned them that if they continued he would take vengeance by destroying their farms. Meanwhile he was experiencing great difficulty in finding water for the cattle which had to be pushed back from the Marico and Crocodile Rivers. "His blood was now up", says Mr. Ellenberger, and, notwithstanding instructions to the contrary, his men raided farm after farm over the border. Many were killed, but large numbers of cattle were captured and brought safely to Mochudi. On one occasion, in February 1900, Lentswe set out with the Makoba and Majanko regiments to intercept the Boer supply wagons en route to the laagers at Derdepoort and Sikwane. He occupied Kaye Pits, halfway between Ganskuil and Derdepoort, where he ambushed and seized a convoy of six wagons full of clothing and provisions. The Boers at Derdepoort, on receipt of the news, set out in pursuit, but were beaten off with the loss of nine men, while the BaKgatla had two men killed and twenty wounded.

Soon after this the Boers abandoned their positions at Derdepoort and Sikwane, and withdrew inland into the western Transvaal. Lentswe, claiming that he had to defend his people at Saulspoort from possible attack, sent the Majanko regiment there, but in the main his men used the opportunity to loot cattle fairly indiscriminately from European farms and from various local Native tribes said to be "disloyal" to the British. On one occasion a sharp skirmish with a party of Boers at Moreteletse resulted in the death of several BaKgatla, including Lentswe's great ntona (confidential assistant) Tletsit. Generally, however, the BaKgatla succeeded in avoiding serious losses, while at the same time they added greatly to the wealth of cattle looted. This seems to have continued until the end of the war, by which time (1902) the BaKgatla had gone a long way towards making good the cattle they had lost during the rinderpest epidemic of 1896.

Soon after the war was over, Lentswe asked to be recognized formally as chief over the BaKgatla in the Transvaal, and for the extension of his Reserve to include all the land in the Transvaal which had at one time or another been occupied by BaKgatla. The latter request was immediately turned down as preposterous. In regard to the former, he was told that he could not be officially recognized as having any authority in the Transvaal, since his main settlement was outside that Territory and he was not subject to the control of its Administration. But a compromise was reached by which he was allowed to nominate a deputy to act for him in the Transvaal; in this way he could in effect control and actually govern the people there, while in theory his deputy was the chief officially recognized by the Transvaal Government.² He accordingly sent his brother Ramono to Saulspoort in 1903 to act as his deputy. Ever since the BaKgatla-bagaKgafela in the Transvaal have consistently identified themselves with those in the Protectorate. They have acknowledged the chief in Mochudi as their head, paid him tribute, and fulfilled their other tribal obligations and responsibilities towards him in the same way as did the section in the Protectorate. Lentswe for his part kept in close touch with his people in the Transvaal, visiting them frequently and helping them in many ways. In particular, he early realized that it was

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1. Cf. the letter written in December 1901 by Rev. P.B.J. Stoffberg, D.R.C. missionary among the BaKgatla, and quoted below in Appendix F, no. (b), pp 43 f.

2. Mafeking registry J.496.

necessary for them to buy the land they occupied, and to this end he not only imposed special levies upon them for the purpose, but helped them out of his own resources whenever necessary.

The years immediately following upon the Anglo-Boer war were not particularly noteworthy in incident. But during this time the European influences already at work among the BaKgatla gradually penetrated more and more into the life of the people. Christianity, especially, steadily consolidated its position as their official religion. In 1904 a large new church was built in Mochudi, at the cost of some £1,500, obtained by sending out the Makuka regiment to work in European industrial areas for £5 each. Under Mr. P.B.J. Stofberg, who was the missionary at Mochudi during 1898-1907, education also made very great progress. The first schools among the BaKgatla had been established by the Mission soon after it came to the tribe in 1864, and as early as 1878 the missionary then in charge reported that "books and clothes have already become the fashion among the young Kafirs, although unfortunately they then become very conceited."¹ Mr. Stofberg devoted himself to education with great enthusiasm and success. A report written in 1905 by Mr. E.S. Sargent shows that there were then over 1,000 children at school, and comments favourably upon the enthusiasm of the people. The teaching given, however, seems to have been most elementary, and confined in the main to religious preparation and the rudiments of literacy. Mr. Sargent interviewed Lentwe and the BaKgatla in kgotla, and noted that "the discussion in regard to education was unusually free from complaints as to unsatisfactory relations between the tribe and the missionary, it turned chiefly upon the various ways in which the schools could be improved, for instance, by the employment of better teachers, by industrial training, and by the use of more English."²

In April 1906 the High Commissioner (Lord Selborne) met the chiefs of the southern Protectorate at Gaberones. Judging from his report of the conversation that he had with Lentwe, there seem to have been no very serious problems confronting the BaKgatla at the time.

"Linchwe began by stating that some doubt existed as to his boundary line in the neighbourhood of Sequani. I promised him that if he would represent the matter fully to the Resident Commissioner a definite decision would be given on the point. He next complained that his people were being deprived of water owing to the damming of the Marico and Crocodile Rivers. He was unable to give me full particulars as to the situation of the dams, but I promised that the matter would be inquired into, and that if I found he had any legitimate grievance I would see that it was remedied. He then referred to that section of his tribe which comes under the jurisdiction of the Transvaal Government. He had no complaint to make as to the treatment of these people, but expressed the hope that the High Commissioner would take the same interest in their welfare as he had always taken in that of the BaKgatla in the Protectorate. He also mentioned certain questions as to the tenure of land by BaKgatla in the Transvaal, but said that he was quite satisfied to leave these matters to the Transvaal Native Affairs Department. The only other matter he brought forward was the case of certain of his people who were convicted in 1903 in connection with the death of a German subject. I do not think that Linchwe has any cause for complaint in this connection, but I promised him that I would inquire into the facts."

Two years later, however, an issue arose that vitally concerned the future of the BaKgatla and all the other tribes in the Protectorate. In 1908 a National Convention sat in Durban and Cape Town to discuss closer union among the various South African colonies. The Protectorate tribes were at once assured that the scheme would not immediately affect them, and that there was no present intention

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1. De Kerkbode, vol. xxx (1878), p. 289.

2. Report on Native Education in South Africa: Part III. -- Education in the Protectorates (London 1908), p. 43.

3. British Bluebook Cd.3094 (1906), pp. 2 f.

of including them in the proposed union. Nevertheless they betrayed great anxiety, and various petitions were sent in by them protesting against incorporation. Lentswe also had an interview with the Resident Commissioner on the subject in January 1909, at which he said that he and his people had at one time been under the Government of the Transvaal, and did not want to return to that Government, or to be handed over to any other; they wished to remain directly under the King.¹ As it turned out, incorporation was postponed indefinitely, although the question has been raised again on several occasions within recent years.

In August 1914 the (first) Great War was started. Lentswe, like the other chiefs, responded willingly to the Government's call for men to join the African Labour Corps. Volunteers from the Majanko, Mantwane, and Makuka, regiments were sent to a depot in the Cape Peninsula, whence they were drafted to German South West Africa. After the conquest of that country by the Union forces, they returned home. The Administration then asked for more men to accompany the South African troops to Flanders, and a party of about 140 BaKgatla, drawn from the Majanko and Makuka regiments, was sent over early in 1917 under the leadership of Ramorotong (son of Lentswe's half-brother Maganêlô) and Moshwane (another half-brother). They remained there until after the war was over. In addition to helping in this way, Lentswe collected over £300 in cash from his people as a contribution to the War Fund.

By this time Lentswe's health was beginning to fail. In October 1914, soon after the beginning of the war, he had suffered a great personal bereavement through the death of his eldest son and heir Kgafêla (born 1880). The death of over 550 BaKgatla during the world-wide influenza epidemic of 1918 was also deeply felt by him. In October 1920 he himself became so ill, after a paralytic stroke, that the conduct of all tribal affairs was taken over by his second son Isang. Lentswe lingered on a few years more, but took no further active part in the government of the tribe. He died on October 25, 1924, and was buried in the great cattle-kraal adjoining the chief's *kgotle* in Mochudi. He was very deeply lamented by his people, who still revere his memory as that of a great and wise chief, under whom their tribe grew strong and prosperous. The impression he made upon Government officials and other Europeans was likewise extremely favourable. We have already quoted the description given of him in 1897 by Lord Milner, and as a final tribute may add what was written of him in 1913 by Sir R. Williams (Resident Commissioner, 1901-06):²

"Linchwe was a splendid chief, a big, strong, burly man, full of character, very downright, and capable of being a warm friend or a powerful foe, just as he was dealt with himself. One had only to speak plainly with him, and never deceive him, to win his entire regard and his unfailing support. Of none of my chiefs have I so stirring a recollection as of the fine manly and outspoken Linchwe."

VII. THE MODERN PERIOD

Isang (born 1886, died 1941) ruled the BaKgatla from October 1920 until October 1929, when he handed the chieftainship over to the true heir, Kgafêla's eldest son Molefi. His assumption of the regency did not pass unchallenged. Segale (Lentswe's brother in the second house) felt that the position should have been occupied either by himself or by Ramorotong, the son of his (deceased) elder brother Maganêlô. He based his claim upon the fact that his mother had been the first wife married by Kgamanyane;³ but as she had never been recognized

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1. Mafeking registry J.1238.

2. How I became a Governor (London 1913), p. 279.

3. Cf. above, p. 11.

as the great wife, he found comparatively few supporters. Nevertheless he seems to have instigated Ramorotong to act against Isang, and very soon after the latter had taken over the regency there was a violent scene in the kgotla, where Ramorotong publicly insulted him. A special tribal meeting (letsholo) was summoned, at which it was decided that Ramorotong should be expelled from the Reserve. The Administration, having inquired into the matter through the local Resident Magistrate, agreed with the decision, and Ramorotong was duly banished.¹ He went to live among the BaKwena at Molepolole, and ultimately died there. Following upon this affair, Isang was formally installed as acting chief in January 1921, in the presence of the Resident Commissioner.

Under Isang's rule the tribe made rapid progress towards civilization.² One of his most notable achievements was in connection with education. After the departure of Mr. Stofberg, the Mission policy in regard to education had become increasingly distasteful to the tribe, which felt that, for reasons mainly personal, far less zeal and interest were being shown than in the past. In 1915 there were nearly 500 children at school. In 1918 there were only 75 on the registers, the people refusing to support the Mission schools and talking of establishing their own. In 1920, finally, it was agreed, mainly through Isang's intervention, that the control of the schools should be transferred from the Mission to a tribal committee on which the Administration, the Mission, and the tribe, were all represented. About the same time the Administration created a general Native Development Fund, financed by an annual contribution of 3s. (later 5s.) from every taxpayer. This facilitated the revival of education by providing a very necessary increase in the funds available for expenditure. In 1923 a magnificent school building was erected at the tribal expense in Mochudi, the money being raised by a special levy of £5 per head upon Isang's own regiment (the Motshetshela); and in the following year Isang persuaded the Administration to appoint and pay the salary of a European principal for the school. He himself actively encouraged the people to send their children to school, and always took a very keen interest in educational development.

Isang also initiated and carried out an extensive programme of water development to meet one of the greatest needs of the Reserve. Financing the scheme by imposing a levy of one good ox, or £6.10s. in cash, upon every taxpayer in the tribe, he caused sixteen boreholes to be sunk in various parts of his country, seven were successful, and they did much to ensure the material well-being of both people and live-stock. Isang further encouraged his people to acquire good ploughs and other European implements, and, in his own words, "aimed generally at bringing them to adopt the White man's methods in ranching and agriculture." He sought markets for their cattle, grain, and other produce, and continued Lentswe's wise policy of controlling the sale of Kafir corn to prevent famine. In 1924 he also passed a law preventing young people from drinking Kafir beer, and restricting its sale, although not its manufacture, in the tribe generally; but the law does not seem to have ever been strictly enforced, and it soon lapsed.

While promoting progress, however, Isang also tried to retain, and where necessary revive, what he regarded as "good old" tribal customs that were falling into decay. He restored and enforced the practice of giving bogadi at marriage, and introduced a new system of initiation to replace the old circumcision ceremonies which had been abolished by Lentswe.³ He insisted upon the proper celebration of marriages, and revived the ritual purification of people who had suffered bereavement. He also openly employed the services of rainmakers, mainly owing to pressure from the tribe, but partly also because he hoped that this would give him a firmer hold upon the people, who have not yet lost their conviction that the provision of rain is one of the main duties of the chief. His

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1. Gaberones registry, S.P. 1337.

2. Isang's views on tribal development are quoted below in Appendix G (pp. 49 ff.).

3. See above, p. 18.

object in all this, he told me, was to develop among the BaKgatla a feeling of patriotism, of pride in their own culture, in so far as it was not blatantly in conflict with general social and material advancement.

The commencement of Isang's regency coincided roughly with new Administrative intervention in the life of the BaKgatla. In 1919 official machinery was provided for the first time to regulate the hearing of appeals by European magistrates from the verdicts of chiefs. The following year a Native Fund, financed by additional Native taxation, was created to subsidize education and economic development, and a Native Advisory Council of chiefs and other tribal representatives was set up for the whole Territory. With contributions from the Native Fund, education, as we have seen, expanded rapidly in the Reserve; and at meetings of the Advisory Council Isang always took a prominent part in urging upon the Administration the economic needs of the BaKgatla and other tribes. It was largely due to him, too, that the Native Marriages Proclamation of 1926 was issued, which restored to the chiefs certain jurisdiction over the matrimonial affairs of tribesmen married under civil law.

About the same time there was an important change in Mission policy. The Church had previously aimed at developing a European type of Christianity, stripped of everything pertaining to heathenism. It had accordingly forbidden converts to practise such patently "uncivilized" usages as circumcision, polygamy, bogadi, and the inheritance of widows. But under Mr. J. Reyneke (1923-35), acting in consultation with Isang, the policy, as described to me by the former, was "to give the tribe a form of national religion, based on the principles of Christianity, but adjusted as far as possible to Kgatla beliefs and aspirations; bogadi, for instance, is now regarded as an essential part of Christian marriage, the initiation ceremonies for boys are no longer frowned upon, but an attempt is made to control and direct them, and national Church festivals have been instituted."¹ The Mission, moreover, now that it no longer controlled education, diverted its energies and resources to the medical needs of the people. With the aid of a Government subsidy, a trained European nurse was added to the Mission staff in 1924, and a European doctor in 1927, and a dispensary and later a small hospital were built in Mochudi. A small printing-press was also installed, where, since 1930, a bi-monthly vernacular journal has been locally published, the only one of its kind in the Protectorate.

Energetic and effective as Isang was in promoting the progress of his people, and able as he undoubtedly was as a ruler, he gradually lost favour with the majority of the tribe. They complained that he was too harsh in his judgments, and imposed too many levies upon them for public enterprises; and when the latter years of his reign were marked by recurring droughts, they maintained also that he was unsuccessful as a rainmaker. For these and other reasons they urged that Molefi, although still comparatively young (he was born in September 1909), should be made chief as soon as possible. Isang, fully aware of tribal feeling, submitted to the popular demand, and on October 14, 1929, Molefi was ceremonially installed as chief.²

Molefi's accession marked another turning point in the history of the tribe. It coincided with much fuller intervention by the Administration in tribal affairs than had hitherto been thought necessary or desirable. In 1930 the Administration itself took over the control of education throughout the Protectorate, and

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1. Cf. also Mr. Reyneke's published statement in De Kerkbode, 31 October 1928, pp. 646-48.

2. This was also the day on which I began my fieldwork among the BaKgatla, whom I visited frequently during the next few years. My account of tribal history since then is based mainly upon my own observations, and upon the official records of tribal meetings and Administrative inquiries into local disputes and other political matters.

an ambitious but successful programme of development was instituted. In 1931 an agricultural show, the first of its kind in the Territory, was held in Mochudi, and soon afterwards a Native agricultural demonstrator was appointed to the Reserve. At the same time a Government representative was for the first time stationed in Mochudi itself, the local administrative centre having previously been at Gaberones. The man appointed was ostensibly regarded as agricultural adviser to the tribe, but his main task in fact was to keep an eye on the internal political situation, which was by no means satisfactory. When he retired on pension the following year, he was replaced by a regular district officer, subordinate to the Resident Magistrate at Gaberones, but in January 1935 the Kgatla Reserve was constituted a separate administrative district with its own District Commissioner. In the same month Proclamations Nos. 74 and 75 of 1934 came into force, which regulated and considerably modified the duties and powers of chiefs and tribal councils. Under the powers conferred upon the Administration by these Proclamations, Molefi was in November 1936 suspended from exercising the powers of chief, his younger brother Mmusi being appointed to act in his place. In July 1937, finally, Molefi was banished from the Reserve by the Administration.

This drastic action was the culmination of a period of internal strife and misrule which had disastrously affected the general progress of the tribe. At first Molefi and Isang promised to work well together, but it was not long before relations between them became so strained that they were continually at loggerheads. Molefi, although of attractive personality and good intelligence, was addicted to drink, he tended also to absent himself frequently from his tribal duties at Mochudi, and he openly resented the attitude adopted towards him by Isang, whom, however, he himself did not treat with becoming respect. Isang, on the other hand, was by no means as tolerant as he might have been of Molefi's inexperience and shortcomings; he was also suspected of having defrauded Molefi of the inheritance due to him, and of aiming to regain the chieftainship for himself. In addition there was a private feud between the two, based largely on the fact that Isang had not followed tribal custom and cohabited with Molefi's mother after the death of her husband Kgafela.

The differences came to a head in December 1932, when Molefi summoned Isang to a letsholo meeting to answer various accusations. Isang, fearing for his life, refused to attend, and appealed to the Government for protection. Bloodshed was narrowly averted by the intervention of the officials, and for the time being a reconciliation of sorts was effected. But during the following year the situation steadily degenerated. Molefi's own absences from the Reserve, his drunkenness, and his neglect of tribal duties, became more marked, and early in 1934 he came into conflict with the Administration by persisting with a tribal levy which he had been instructed to suspend. As a result, the High Commissioner in July 1934 administered a severe warning to him that unless he mended his ways by the middle of December the conduct of tribal affairs would be handed over to someone "able and willing to attend to them properly". Molefi thereupon threatened to resign, alleging that he was not receiving adequate financial support from the tribe, and above all that Isang was making his position impossible. The Administration decided to hold a tribal meeting at which the matters in dispute between Molefi and Isang could be openly and exhaustively discussed. After two postponements, owing to Isang's illness, the meeting was finally held on November 12-17 (1934). It was attended by the Resident Commissioner and other officials, and by the chiefs of the other Protectorate tribes, who had been specially invited to come in the hope that they would help to arrive at a satisfactory settlement. After a hearing of six days, which in effect resolved itself into a trial, Isang was found guilty of showing disrespect to the chief and of trying to undermine his authority. For this he was sentenced by the tribe to pay a fine of £350 and to remain at his cattle-post for six months. At the same time, Molefi himself was publicly censured for his drunkenness and irresponsible conduct, and it was decided to appoint six men as "guardians" to see that he mended his ways and attended properly to his duties.

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During the course of the meeting, it became evident that much of the trouble between Isang and Molefi was due to uncertainty and suspicions regarding the fate of Lentswe's estate. As the assets of the estate were partly in the Protectorate and partly in the Transvaal, the two Governments concerned appointed a Joint Commission, which sat in May 1935, to investigate the position and to make recommendations for a final settlement. The findings of the Commission were accepted unreservedly by the BaKgatla. It may be added that no reliable evidence was produced to show that Isang had tampered unlawfully with the assets of the estate, and the Commissioners paid him a special tribute for the able manner in which he had been able to account for his administration as guardian. The inquiry coincided with the expiration of Isang's period of exile, and when the hearings were over he was formally welcomed back to the tribe by Molefi. Henceforth, however, he was content to play a more subdued, although still influential, role in tribal affairs, a decision probably due in part to the ill-health from which he ultimately died in January 1941.

The settlement of the estate question was followed by a comparatively peaceful period during which Molefi and Isang were, superficially at least, on good terms and working together for the welfare of the tribe. During this time an attempt was made to place the administration of tribal funds on a proper basis. These funds, consisting of traders' stand rents, levies, hut tax commission, and similar revenues, had hitherto been under the sole control of the chief, no check being kept upon the manner in which he handled them. A Tribal Trust Deed was now drawn up, which, after being discussed with the chief and tribe, and suitably amended where necessary, was signed by Molefi and approved by the High Commissioner. It came into effect in December 1935. It provided for the control of all tribal funds by a board of seven trustees, comprising the District Commissioner as chairman, the chief, four members elected by the tribe and a treasurer appointed by the tribe, and it stipulated that these funds were to be used in specified ways to meet the cost of developmental works and tribal administration, including the payment of an annual salary to the chief.

The new order did not last very long. Towards the end of 1935 Molefi became involved in a personal dispute with the local missionary, and he pursued the quarrel so vigorously that he again began to neglect his tribal duties. The experiment of keeping him in check by means of "guardians" had failed to work, and during 1936 he repeatedly flouted the authority of the Administration, and violated the goodwill of the tribe, by a series of irresponsible actions. Finally, in October, he incited and encouraged members of his own regiment (the Matšhama) to assault and beat the Native school supervisor and other people in Mochudi, break up a concert held in the church, cause a disturbance during divine service, and, in fact, inaugurate "a mild reign of terror". This was the last straw, and he was immediately suspended from the chieftainship (November 2). A Government inquiry into his conduct was held later in the month, and the Commissioner concluded his findings by stating that "the general conduct of the affairs of the BaKgatla by Molefi in his capacity as Chief has been unsatisfactory in the extreme and calls for drastic Administrative action." Nothing further was done at once, but as Molefi continued to cause disturbances in Mochudi, using his influence and authority to hamper the work of the new chief, it became obvious that his presence in the Reserve was detrimental to peace, order, and good government, and in July 1937 he was ordered by the Administration to leave.

Mmusi (born 1915) had been appointed acting chief on the suspension of his elder brother Molefi. He at once found himself confronted with several grave difficulties. Molefi's adherents formed themselves into an association called the Ipelegeng, whose object was to bring about the reinstatement of their former chief. Kgafêla's widow (mother of both Molefi and Mmusi) sympathized with the movement, thereby greatly embarrassing her younger son. The Ipelegeng caused considerable unrest by their intrigues and other activities, and were ultimately prosecuted and fined by the

/chief's

chief's Tribunal (September 1937). The convictions were confirmed on appeal to the Court of the District Commissioner, but a further appeal to the Special (now High) Court (July 1938) succeeded on a point of law. The effect was to increase the prestige of the Ipelegang and lead to an increase in their numbers. Meanwhile they had constituted themselves into a religious sect, known as the Zion African Church, hoping in this way to avert the charge of being a subversive political body. By this act they cut themselves adrift from the Dutch Reformed Church, which already had other troubles to contend with. In the previous year (1937) a dispute between the missionary and the Native minister at Sikwane, whose conduct had proved unsatisfactory, had led to a schism resulting in the creation of a separatist Church under the leadership of the man concerned (Thomas Phiri). Apart from the confusion caused by this religious upheaval, Mmusi had trouble with his mother over the formation of new regiments for both boys and girls. Without her assistance, no action could be taken in the matter, and it was only after considerable difficulty that she was persuaded to give way, and the regiments were formed in July 1939.

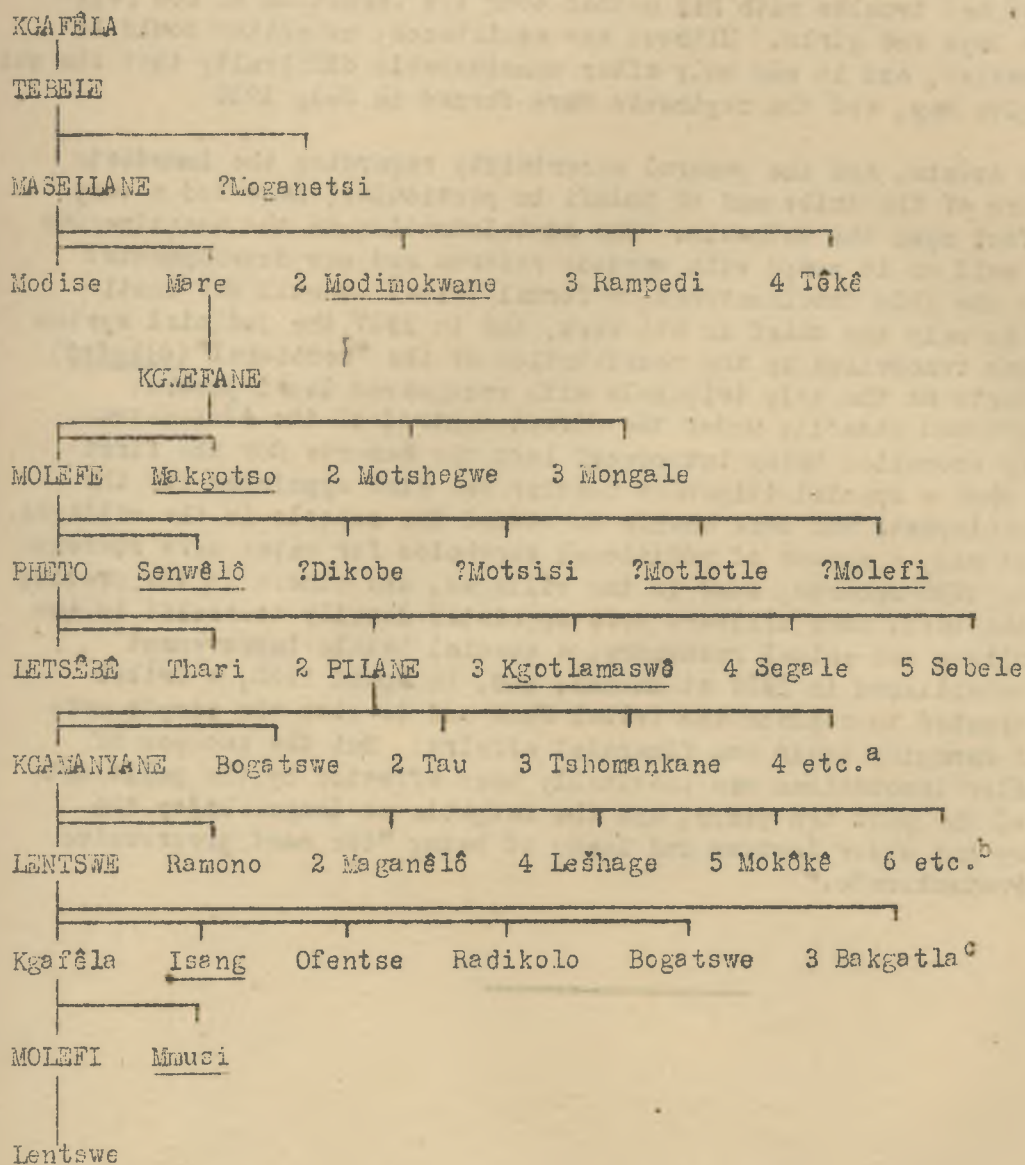
All these events, and the general uncertainty regarding the immediate political future of the tribe and of Molefi in particular, have had a very disturbing effect upon the BaKgatla. The Administration in the meantime was pushing on as well as it could with various reforms and new developments. Following upon the 1934 Proclamations, a formal Tribal Council was instituted in 1935 to help the chief in his work, and in 1937 the judicial system of the tribe was remodelled by the constitution of the "sectional" (*dikgôrô*) and village courts as the only tribunals with recognized legal powers. Education progressed steadily under the direct control of the Administration, secondary education being introduced into the Reserve for the first time in 1937, when a special itinerant teacher was also appointed for the boys at the cattleposts who were unable to attend the schools in the villages. With Government aid, a number of additional boreholes for water were successfully sunk from 1935 onwards, some in the villages, and others in the grazing areas out on the veld; more officers were appointed locally to assist in improving agriculture and animal husbandry, a special Cattle Improvement Centre being established in 1937 at Masama; and, in April 1938, a Tribal Treasury was created to replace the Tribal Fund and to give the people more opportunity of managing their own financial affairs. But the success of these and similar innovations has inevitably been affected by the political disturbances of the past ten years, and the BaKgatla no longer enjoy the reputation they had under Lentswe and Isang of being "the most progressive tribe in the Protectorate."

APPENDIX A

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE KGATLA CHIEFS

This list is confined to the ruling dynasty of the BaKgatla-bagaKgafêla. For their connexion with the baMosêtlha and other Kgatla groups, cf. the list given in my Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom (Oxford 1938), p. 306.

The names of full chiefs are given in CAPITALS, and those of acting chiefs or regents are underlined. All the sons (so far as known) of the great house are listed; for the minor houses, only the first son is named (his rank being indicated by the number preceding his name; where his rank is no longer remembered, the symbol ? precedes his name instead).



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- a. See below, (a) The sons of Pilane
- b. See below, (b) The sons of Kgamanyane
- c. See below, (c) The descendants of Lentswe

(a) The Sons of PILANE

PILANE married (in order of rank):

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|--|
| 1. Mankube | mother of | KGAMANYANE, Bogetswe |
| 2. Mantshelana, | " " | Tau, Komane, Mainole |
| 3. Mmadipitse, | " " | Tshomankane, Twenyane |
| 4. Mmakgabo, | " " | Mantirisi |
| 5. Modie, | " " | Letsêbê, Kgabotshwene, Bothoke, Diphôtwê |
| 6. Basetsana, | " " | Kgari, Molemi |
| 7. Ntikwe, | " " | Rankoaa |
| 8. Kenntse, | " " | Bafêwe |
| 9. Mmakgomo, | " " | Moselekatse |
| 10. Mmalebonye, | " " | Kautlwale |
| 11. Sebolêlô, | " " | Monamo |
| 12. Sêkolengwe, | " " | Kobedi, Pilane, Sekumane |
| 13. Mmati, | " " | Dikope |

(b) The Sons of KGAMANYANE

KGAMANYANE married (in order of rank)

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Dikolo, | mother of | LENTSWE, Ramono |
| 2. Nkomeng, | " " | Magenêlô, Segale, Modise, Motšhele |
| 4. Nthebeng, | " " | Lešhage, Motlapeng, Dialwa |
| 5. Mpa fi, | " " | Mokôkê, Mpolêla |
| 6. Lepono, | " " | Toto |
| 7. Mma lenare, | " " | Poni |
| 8. Masotwe, | " " | Mothibe, Paul, Sekgoma |
| 11. Selolwang, | " " | Hotshwane |
| 12. Mmantšesane, | " " | Masebane, Pete |
| 13. Mmamogau, | " " | Kupakang, Maponyane |
| 14. Mokgwethi, | " " | Remorajana |
| 16. Mosêtlhê, | " " | Mogale |
| 17. Keiseng, | " " | Ramfolo, Diphôtwê |
| 19. Nkomeng, | " " | Rammenane, Jautse, Setsêbê, Magenêlô |
| 20. Letlhobokwe, | " " | Ntita |
| 21. Peete, | " " | Letsêbê, Kgabotshwene, Mošwêšwê |
| 22. Bagome, | " " | Rampedi |
| 23. Mentlha, | " " | Rekanyane, Moji, Mokotedi, Loube |
| 24. Mmadikeledi, | " " | Kgari, Molemi |
| 25. Mopula, | " " | Molomowatau, Makgotso |
| 26. Mmokotse, | " " | Mokgalagadi, Pheto, Masuge |
| 27. Mossye, | " " | Ramokokole |
| 28. Mmaserufe, | " " | Ramona |
| 29. Tselane, | " " | Ramathari |

(The names of wives with daughters only have been omitted from this list.)

(c) The descendants of LENTSWE

LENTSWE married (in order of rank).

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Motlapela, mother of | |
| (a) Kgafêla, | who begot Molefi, Mmusi |
| (b) Isang, | " " Ramono, Lentswe, Bontle, Bontlane |
| (c) Ofentse, | " " Thari |
| (e) Radikolo, | " " Mokôkê |
| (f) Bogetswe, | " " Motlogêlwa |

2. Mogeritse (who bore a daughter only)

3. Lokwalo, mother of Bakgatla, who begot Senwêlô, Pheto.

(The names of sons who died without issue have been omitted from this list.)

APPENDIX B

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE TRIBE

As indicated in the text, the BaKgatlā-bagaKgafēla have during the course of their history absorbed, or been joined by, various groups of other peoples. The present population of the tribe is accordingly derived from many different stocks, of which the following are the more important.¹

<u>Tribal Stock</u>	<u>Totem</u>	<u>Taxpayers</u> <u>(1941)</u>
BaKgatlā	kgabo (ape)	
bagaKgafēla		1,740
baMēdibana		133
baMosētla		56
other sections		309
BaKwena	kwena (crocodile)	
baMansmakgōtē		332
other groups		177
BaKāa	tlou (elephant)	198
BaPhoting	phuti (duiker)	196
BaTlōkwa	thakadu (antbear)	147
BagaMalete	nare (buffalo)	72
BaBididi	letlhalerwa (wild dog)	54
BaRokologadi	noku (porcupine)	44
MaKaLaKa	mmutla (hare)	34
BaHurutshe	tshwene (baboon)	21
baKhurutshe	kgama (hartebeest)	<u>10</u>
		3,523

1. The table is derived from an analysis of the ethnic affiliations of the various recognized ward-heads in the tribe. The third column gives the number of taxpayers (= adult males) under the ward-heads of the different communities. By no means all the men subject to a particular ward-head belong to the same stock as himself, but I have not been able to make a more detailed analysis for the tribe as a whole.

APPENDIX C

POPULATION OF THE KGATLA RESERVE

The following figures have been extracted from the census returns for 1936. They are not too reliable for the Native population, but constitute the only comprehensive data at present available

(a) The Native Population

	Unweaned babes	Under 16	Over 16	Old People	Total
Males	477	2,816	1,179	1,764	6,236
Females	500	2,785	1,756	2,589	7,630
Totals	977	5,601	2,935	4,353	13,866

(b) Other groups

	Males	Females	Total
Europeans	25	18	43
Indians	5	2	7
Coloured	3	7	10

(c) Distribution of Natives by Villages

Village	Males	Females	Total	Absentees*	Grand Total
Mochudi	3,911	4,740	8,651	1,144	9,795
Mathubudukwane	410	506	916	183	1,099
Tlhagakgama	300	380	680	104	784
Odi	297	374	671	100	771
Sikwane	290	354	644	97	741
Malolwane	294	384	678	14	692
Morwa	224	273	497	64	561
Mabalane	191	227	418	96	514
Modipane	200	227	427	54	481
Rasesa	93	126	219	42	261
Herero	26	39	65	11	76
Totals	6,236	7,630	13,866	1,909	15,775

* Including mainly men away working in European industrial areas of the Transvaal and other parts of the Union.

APPENDIX D

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE MIGRATION OF THE BAKGATLA FROM THE TRANSVAAL (1869)

The following quotations give the views of (a) a contemporary mission writer, (b) the BaKgatla themselves, and (c) a leading South African historian, upon the reasons that led Kgamanyane and the main body of the tribe to trek from the Transvaal into Bechuanaland.

(a)

During 1871 the Rev. J.H. Neethling, of the Dutch Reformed Church, made an inspection tour of the various mission stations belonging to the Church. In his report, published in De Kerkbode, vol. xxiii (1871), he refers as follows to Saulspoor, where the first mission among the BaKgatla had been established in 1864:

"From here we went .. to Mr. Conin's station at Pilaansberg. The ground was bought by the missionary and Kgamanyane in partnership for an appreciable sum. But the native inhabitants have nearly all departed. Kgamanyane with thousands and thousands of his people, with their property and stock, have trekked away nine or eight days by ox wagon, because he did not want to remain under the Kafir law of the country. But what, according to many statements, seems actually to have been the true cause of his departure, we shall not mention, out of consideration of the persons therein involved. Enough that thousands of people have trekked out of a land, which is their lawfully purchased property." (pp. 408 f.)

(b)

In 1904 Sir G. Lagden, Land Commissioner of the Transvaal, visited the Rustenburg District to investigate various questions connected with the acquisition and tenure of land by Natives. The leaders of the local section of BaKgatla read an Address to him, in the course of which they said:

"In or about 1864 the Boers raided us and without reason made us their slaves and treated us with great injustice and cruelty. Among other acts of punishment and inhumanity Paul Kruger late President of the South African Republic tied our late Chief Kgamanyane to the wheel of a waggon and whipped him by himself from the effects of which unmerited punishment he eventually died. They (Boers) compelled us to pay them 300 head of cattle also sheep and goats which were exceeding the number of head of cattle for a tract of country which was our country. These were paid by our late chief Kgamanyane before his death. They then (the Boers) gave us both diagrams and transfers of the ground which they have deprived us of and then demanded the documents from us, tore them up in our presence and then drove us away from late President Kruger's farm where the meeting had been held. After this they compelled us to pull their waggons loaded with stones for building a large wall between two mountains to make one of the largest ponds in the world for irrigating their fields. These troubles caused the chief Kgamanyane and his people to complain, and when our chief asked, the reason why they are so cruelly and unjustly treated? they drove him and his people away to cross the Marico River to live in British Bechuanaland Protectorate. This was done at the instigation of Paul Kruger's people."

(I quote from a copy shown me by Isang in 1932.)

(c)

The well-known South African historian, G.M. Theal, deals as follows with the BaKgatla in his standard History of South Africa from 1873 to 1884 (London 1919), vol. ii, pp. 176 f.:

"These Bakatla were among the most restless people in the whole country. They lived at Maboetsa when the reverend Dr. Livingstone, who was succeeded by the reverend Roger Edwards, was a missionary with them, and where they were visited in June 1844 by the hunter Gordon Cumming. Their chief was then Moselale. He was at war with Setsheli, who, however, gave him shelter eight years later when the Transvaal authorities were trying to bring him to account for cattle stealing.

In 1870 the Bakatla were living at Pilaansberg in the district of Rustenburg in the Transvaal, and were under the chief Khemanyani. They were a nuisance to all their neighbours, and the chief was as insolent as he was thievishly disposed. But one day he provoked Commandant Paul Kruger, who had ridden on horseback to his kraal to seek redress for some injury, to such an extent that Mr. Kruger's patience became exhausted, and he chastised the chief soundly with his riding snambok. Khemanyani complained of this as an indignity, and to avoid a repetition of it fled to Setsheli's country."

[The people referred to in the first paragraph were not the BaKgatla-baga-Kgafela at all, but the BaKgatla-bagaMmanaane, who had long been an entirely separate tribe. The second paragraph, which is obviously derived from Boer sources, may be compared with Mr. Neethling's statement quoted above in (a), which suggests that Kgamanyane had good reason for complaining of his treatment.]

APPENDIX E

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO THE RELATIONS BETWEEN
THE BAKOATIA AND THE BAKWENA (1871 - 1894)

1.

Extracts from the reports of Mr. A. Bailie (see p. 12 above), published in Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of South Africa (Bluebook C.2220; 1879).

(a) Dated: Molepolole, Oct. 2, 1876.

"On my arrival here I had an interview with the Chief, and delivered His Excellency's letter, and explained my mission... He is at war with a neighbouring tribe. A few years ago, Ganinyan, a Chief, being oppressed in the Transvaal, sought refuge in Sichele's country, and his tribe has prospered so well that now they are nearly as strong as Sichele's, and refuse to pay tribute any longer. Sichele has suffered by the war, and has authorised me to negotiate a peace with Ganinyan's people. I am not bound down to any terms". (p. 50)

(b) Dated: Shoshong Bamanguato, Khamo's Chief Station, Nov. 6, 1876.

"..... on the 10th day of October I left the Chief Sechele's station en route for this place and arrived at Machodi, Leucore's station, on the 12th October.

Leucore did not meet me himself, but sent his uncles "Bagatsue" and "Tow" and a number of other people to meet me.

After a long interview on the 12th I was obliged to adjourn the meeting until the following day. On the 13th October Bagatsue and a number of councillors met me again, and it was arranged that there should be no more fighting until my return from Matabeleland, or until some other Government officer should arrive, and that then there should be a meeting held ...

Leucore's tribe are the Bakhatta. They were originally subjects of the Transvaal Republic and lived at a place called Pilansberg in the Rustenburg district. About six years ago the tribe was governed by Ganinyan, Leucore's father, and for some offence Paul Krüger, a Transvaal Commandant, rode into their station and beat the Chief (Ganiyan) severely with a yambok. Ganiyan left the Republic and sought refuge in Sechele's territory, and Sechele allotted him the country about Machodi.

Rather more than a year ago Ganiyan died, and was succeeded by Leucore, a boy of about 17 or 18.

All young natives long for war to prove their prowess. They are excited to it by the traditions of the old men.

Leucore no sooner became Chief than Sechele was informed (in some way) that the Transvaal Government claimed the Bakhatta as their subjects, and therefore the ground upon which they lived as the territory of that Republic. Sechele, anxious to keep as much of his territory as he could, sent a message to Leucore demanding tribute or some sort of acknowledgment that the ground was his, and even proposed to accept one muid of Kafir corn (a nominal tax) for the whole Bakhatta tribe annually.

Some say the Bakhatta agreed to this, and others that they did not; however, the corn was never delivered to Sechele, and an army of Bakwena under "Sibili", Sechele's eldest son, marched to Machodi, attacked the town, and through Sibili's cowardice were repulsed. Sechele is too old to take the field. The Bakhatta made an attack upon Molepolole and were also repulsed. After this each Chief was content to keep his warriors at the principal station, and to confine his operations to stealing from the other and killing his slaves or veldt people.

When I arrived at Molepolole the war had been going on for more than a year, there had been hardly any harvest for two seasons, and from having the armies and large herds of cattle at the two chief stations the waters were nearly exhausted, and the pastures grazed off, and had the war lasted and no crops been raised this season a very severe famine must have followed." (p. 53)

/(c)

* "Leucore" is probably a printer's misreading of "Lencue", the form in which Lentswe's name was often written at that time. (I.S.)

(c) Dated: Kimberley, May 17, 1877.

"Sechele asked me to offer his country to the British Government, which I reported early in October. He also deputed me to settle a peace between himself and Leucini, the Chief of the Bakhatla, which I undertook. I append an original of the document containing the terms Sechele was prepared to make, signed by himself and his sons.

On the 10th October I proceeded to Mochodi, Leucini's chief station, and arrived on the 12th. Leucini appointed Bagatsue (his uncle) and a number of others to meet me, and we had meetings on the 12th and 13th, at which the terms were discussed and agreed to, Bagatsue promising on behalf of Leucini to sign the treaty. For the sake of my cattle I was obliged to hurry away on the 14th October, and left the document in triplicate with a Mr. Lewis, a trader, to be signed by the Chief and forwarded. Leucini has not signed this treaty, but has nevertheless regarded it to the letter, and both Sechele and Leucini expected that on my return, if not before it, the matter would have been finally settled." (p. 76)

(d) Annexure to above (p. 78).

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT made and entered into between SECHELE, Chief of the Bakwena tribe, of the one part, and LEUCINE, Chief of the Bakhatta tribe residing within the territories of the Chief Sechele, on the other part.

1. The Bakwena and Bakhatta tribes, who have for some time been at war, are now both anxious for peace.

2. The Bakhatta know and the Chief Leucini hereby acknowledges upon their behalf that the ground they at present occupy is part of the territory of the Chief Sechele.

3. The Bakwena and Bakhatta hereby agree to be at peace, and not of themselves, or by their servants, or their allies, to commit any acts of aggression upon each other.

4. The Chief Sechele and the Chief Leucine hereby agree to meet to discuss particular terms of peace, treaty, and alliance, each attended by one adviser or councillor, upon the return of Alexander Cumming Bailie (an officer of the British Government, now on special service) from Matabele land, or upon the arrival of such other officer as the British Government may approve, at such time or times, place or places as the said Alexander Cumming Bailie or such other officer may appoint, the said Alexander Cumming Bailie or such other officer aforesaid to be a member of the conference thus formed by the Chief Sechele and the Chief Leucine, and their respective advisers or councillors.

The whole of this agreement is subject entirely to the approval or otherwise of His Excellency the Administrator of Griqualand West.

Given under our hands at Molopole, Sechele's chief town, this 9th day of October in the year of our Lord 1876.

(Signed) SECHELE.

Witnesses:

(Signed) Fred J. Lewis.

Sebele.

Tumagole.

Michael.

Hgari.

2.

Extracts from "Report of the Commission appointed on the 9th of April, 1880, by H.E. Sir William Owen Lanyon, K.C.M.G., Her Majesty's Administrator of the Transvaal Province, to define the boundary between the said Province and the Territory of the Bakwena tribe, under the chief Sechele, and further empowered to report on, and to effect an amicable settlement of certain disputes pending between Sechele and Lentswe, chief of the BaKgatla tribe."

[From copy in Mafeking Registry, J.6/40. For convenience I have brought the spelling of Native names into conformity with the modern orthography.]

... 4. On the following day [April 29] we had a conference with all the chiefs, for the purpose of arriving at the truth with respect to the disputes between the Bakwena and BaKgatla. After the statement regarding the

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quarrel, made by Sechele to the Commission sent in October 1878, had been read,* Lentswe made a long and somewhat rambling statement in reply, containing his version of, and views on, the matter, and an account of the different fights that had taken place between them, which amounted to this that when his father Kgamanyane left the Transvaal in consequence of a flogging he had received from Paul Kruger, he settled in Sechele's country, by the express invitation of that chief; that he did not pay tribute to Sechele; that the fighting originated in a quarrel about a buffalo shot by one of Kgamanyane's people, and taken possession of wrongfully by some of Sechele's Vaalpens [MaKgalagadi], that the BaKwena were the first aggressors; that he had tried in vain to make peace, and that finally he claimed the country now occupied by him and his people by right of conquest. Sechele having signally failed in an attack he made on his stad Mochudi, and having never been able to dispossess him and his people of it, and to occupy it with his own.

5. The BaKwena representative produced an agreement,* without date, between Sechele and Kgamanyane, in which the latter acknowledged that Sechele was the owner of the land; this document was disputed by Lentswe, but we see no reason to doubt its authenticity, the more so as it was witnessed by the Rev. Mr. Price, the missionary stationed at Sechele's, who was present at the time it was agreed to. The original is in SeTswana, and there is a copy of it in English but this is not signed by Kgamanyane. Copies of these documents are annexed. The BaKwena also denied the correctness of Lentswe's statement in reference to his father's having been invited by Sechele to settle in his country, and in respect to his non-payment of tribute.

6. We informed Lentswe that we could not determine the ownership of the country until we had fixed the boundary line, upon which he urged us to make the line so that Mochudi and the ground now occupied by him and his people would fall on the Transvaal side of the line, in which case he would gladly be a British subject. We told him that we would communicate our decision to him as soon as we had made the line, and that if the country occupied by him fell into Sechele's territory, he would have to elect either to remain out of the Transvaal, or come into it, and that in the former case he could no longer remain chief of that portion of the BaKgatla living in the Transvaal Territory near Pilaansberg; he told us he could not give up these people; they were all his children.

... 11. ... we paid a visit to Mochudi, Lentswe's town, for the purpose of communicating our decision to him, regarding the boundary and learning from him what he intended doing. The BaKwena chiefs being afraid of trusting themselves in the hands of their principal enemy, returned to their own town by a direct route.

12. At our interview with Lentswe which took place on the 8th May, we informed him that according to the boundary made by us Mochudi and the greater part of the land occupied by his people would fall in Sechele's territory, and that he must decide whether he would remain there or remove over the Marico into British territory. But if he chose the former he would under no circumstances be allowed to use Transvaal territory as a base of operations in time of war, or to call in the assistance of that part of his tribe residing at Pilaansberg, but if the latter ground would be allotted to him to the eastward of the Marico, when he would be a British subject, and have to pay taxes, and not be allowed to make war on his own account. He appeared thoroughly to understand our decision, and the alternatives offered to him, but would give no other reply but that he wished to retain Mochudi, and also be under British rule, and that he wanted us to report this as his answer to the Great Chief at Pretoria.

13. We were afterwards told privately by Mr. Brink, the missionary stationed at Mochudi, that he thought that Lentswe really had no great objection to removing, but that he did not like the location offered him on account principally of its unhealthiness, and that he (Lentswe) contemplated a journey to Pretoria to ask the Government to allow him to settle somewhere near Pilaansberg near the rest of his tribe.

14. From Mochudi we proceeded to Sechele's town, which we reached on the 10th May. Sechele had already been informed by the chiefs who had accompanied us in what way the boundary line had been settled; we had several interviews with him, at

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* I have not been able to find any record of this Commission, or of the various documents mentioned in the extracts given above from Mr. Melville's report. (I.S.)

which he expressed himself quite satisfied with that part of the business relating to the boundary line; but he attached supreme importance to the removal of Lentswe from his territory, and at every interview pressed us in the most earnest terms to urge the British Government to help him and his people to procure peace, which he said could only be attained by Lentswe's removal. We promised we would do so, and recommended him to exercise a little more patience, as matters would probably be settled shortly.

... 19. The so-called war as described to us seemed to have been a miserable affair, consisting mostly of raids for cattle lifting, when defenceless herds, chiefly lads, were butchered by both parties, and we have heard of one instance where some men, women and children of Sechele's - Waalpens - were killed in cold blood by Lentswe on Transvaal territory and in the presence of some Boers who vainly tried to save their lives, only on two occasions was there any slaughter of fighting men, of any importance, namely when the BaKwena attacked Mochudi, and getting frightened in the dark fired on one another, and again when the BaKgatla attacked Molepolole, and were repulsed with considerable loss and the cattle they had captured retaken.

20. But however trifling the actual fighting may have been, the unpleasant relations caused by it between the two tribes have undoubtedly been, and still has a most disastrous effect upon both, but more especially on the BaKwena, as they are prevented from sending their cattle for grazing and water to the Nottwani and Marico Rivers, by far the best part of the country for cattle, and having the only really permanent water in the dry season. We traversed large tracts of country, abounding in splendid grazing and comparatively well watered, almost completely deserted, neither party caring to send their cattle to parts where they stood a chance of being captured.

21. We find it difficult to come to a conclusion as to which of the tribes is most to blame for the origin of the hostilities, and think neither is altogether blameless, but although we cannot exculpate the BaKwena in the matter, there can be no doubt that the country is theirs, and that the BaKgatla only occupy it on sufferance. We cannot allow that Lentswe has established his title to it by right of conquest, as claimed by him. There never was any serious effort made by the BaKwena to drive him out from it, Sechele having always - and this is a very important point - been restrained by this Government from fighting; and having for a considerable time past been depending on us to interfere and settle the question. Nor must it be forgotten that Lentswe's position in regard to the Transvaal Government, with a large portion of his tribe living within its borders, and with an unsettled boundary between the Transvaal and the BaKwena, has always been a very dubious one, rendering it impossible for Sechele to say whether, in fighting Lentswe, he was not fighting a Transvaal subject.

22. It cannot but be hard for Sechele to see his people divided from the use of their best grazing ground by a tribe of refugees whom he succoured when in sore distress, and to see their cattle dying yearly in thousands through the want of grazing and water, which, previously, they had had in abundance; and taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration, we cannot but lean to the opinion that they have made out a far stronger case for our sympathy and support than the BaKgatla.

23. We do not care to venture an opinion as to which of the parties is likely to prove the strongest in the event of hostilities, neither of them being very warlike in their habits, nor endowed with a superfluity of courage, but should the BaKwena be assisted as we understand they will be by the BaNgwaketse, and should the BaKgatla be deprived of the help of Mokgosi and Gaborones people, and of the BaKgatla living in the Transvaal, which he should be, we doubt much whether Lentswe will be able to make good his boast of being able to hold the country by right of conquest.

24. In the interests of humanity as well as the Transvaal, such a war is much to be deprecated, and we are of opinion that no endeavour short of actual harm to either party should be spared by this Government to ward it off. This we think can be done by offering Lentswe territory for occupation within our borders to the eastward of Marico and by strictly prohibiting the BaKgatla living within the Transvaal as well as Mokgosi and Gaborone from taking part in any hostilities, and by informing Lentswe that any cattle of his found in the Transvaal during war time will be seized and confiscated. We also

/expect

expect much good in this direction from the action of the Native Commissioner about to be appointed for the Western border, whose presence on the spot, as the representative of the Transvaal Government, will doubtless exert a powerful influence on the councils of the chiefs.

.. 28. We regret very much that we failed in accomplishing one of the objects of our mission, namely an amicable settlement of the quarrel between Sechele and Lentswe; although we cannot help thinking that the satisfactory establishment of the boundary line is an indispensable step towards arriving at such a settlement.

29. In conclusion we have to remark that Sechele and his sub-chiefs appeared most anxious to remain on friendly terms with the English Government and to have their assistance in bringing the dispute with Lentswe to a satisfactory termination. Their reception of the Commission was most cordial and they rendered us every assistance in their power; the chiefs of the other tribes whom we met behaved in the same courteous way and all appeared ready and willing to defer to any suggestions and advice which our Government might offer them."

(Signed) T. Melville

3.

Extracts from Report of Capt. H. Goold-Adams to O.C., Bechuanaland Border Police, 5 March 1888. [Enclosed in despatch No. 79 G. from Administrator, British Bechuanaland, to High Commissioner.]

"I have the honour to inform you, that, acting under the instructions of His Honour the Deputy Commissioner .. I interviewed the Chief Sechele, when passing through this town, and I informed him of my mission. I told him that as I was proceeding without delay to Mangwato, I could not do much until I returned.

As far as I am able to gather the following is a correct history of the origin of the disputes between Sechele and Linchwe: viz - About 1870, Kamanyane, the then Chief of the Bakhatla, the Father of Linchwe, crossed over from the country he was occupying in the Transvaal, and asked permission from Sechele, for himself and people to reside in his land. Sechele granted this permission on condition that he paid an annual tribute. Kamanyane settled with his people at the station that the Bakhatla occupy at present, and for the first year the tribute was paid.

About a year or so after the Bakhatla settling in Sechele's country, a disturbance occurred on the Crocodile River, between some of Kamanyane's hunters and Sechele's Vaalperse, a man was shot on either side, but this didn't lead to any further fighting at the time.

Then commenced a series of cattle thefts by the Bakhatla people from Sechele's cattle posts, on the Notoane River, and the cattle were traced into the Transvaal, it ending in two entire cattle posts being stolen, a portion of these latter were returned to Linchwe. About this time Kamanyane died and was succeeded by his son.

At the beginning of 1875, a portion of the Tribe of Bakhatla, living with Sechele wished to return to the Transvaal, but as a portion of the Tribe were remaining with him, Sechele refused to let all the cattle be taken. The Bakhatla however succeeded in getting away from their station with the cattle. They were overtaken by Sebele, close to Linchwe's town, and the cattle taken from them, but the people allowed to proceed to the Transvaal. The cattle were handed over by Sebele to Linchwe for safe keeping, and Sebele returned to his father Sechele.

Shortly afterwards, news was received that the cattle had been rescued from Linchwe, by the Bakhatla, and from the way in which it was managed, it was believed to have been carried out with his approval. Sechele sent at once to Linchwe and asked how it had taken place, and asking at the same time for his annual tribute from him, stating that it had only once been paid, from the first year of their occupation. Linchwe refused to pay, and did not account as to how the cattle had been taken; Sechele then determined to drive Linchwe and his people back to the Transvaal, and for this purpose he sent an Impi down to Motchudi to attack it. - The attack failed and the Bakwena lost from fifty to seventy men, and had to retreat to their own town.

A sort of cattle warfare then went on for six or seven years, sometimes not a shot being fired by either party for a year, then a cattle raid would take place, and one or two people be killed. One severe fight took place close to Sechele's town, the Bakhatla calling in the aid of the Maletse made a combined attack and cattle raid on Sechele, the attack failed and the cattle were all rescued.

/At

At what time the actual war ceased, it is difficult to say; both sides deny they were the first to ask for peace, but at one time or another both parties did so; it never came to anything.

Since 1882 there has been no bloodshed nor cattle raids.

Sechele's complaints at present are:-

First - Linchwe refuses to acknowledge him as Paramount Chief

Second: To consult him in charging white people for woodcutting.

Third:- Linchwe refuses to allow people sent by Sechele to prospect for gold.

I got Sechele to promise that, if I could get the consent of Linchwe to the above three terms, he would guarantee to the latter all his present Garden lands and cattle posts, but Sechele distinctly stated that if I should fail in my endeavours that he would be obliged to use force, and open the fight again. I asked him to let the matter remain over during my absence at Mangwato, and not do anything to cause a breach of the peace. Sechele appeared to think, from what I said, that the Government would prevent the natives fighting and thus settling their disputes. I informed him what the Government wished was to do their utmost to settle matters peaceably if possible, and if it failed, there was nothing left but to let the Natives themselves settle it in their own way. I explained the dangers we saw in the event of a fight commencing and the probability of other Tribes being brought into it, consequently we tried our best to prevent warfare. If war actually broke out, one should prevent white people giving assistance to either party.

Sechele stated he was sending his son Sebele to see His Honour and that he would give him a letter on the subject to deliver. I told Sebele that I thought a personal visit from his son to the Administrator would do good.

After my return to Molopolole I proceeded to Linchwe's station, and I had a good deal of trouble in obtaining an interview with the Chief but I eventually succeeded, and I saw him at his Kgotla. I explained my mission, and pointed out to him, that in order to save an outbreak of war between Sechele and himself, I wanted to bring their dispute to a peaceable termination if possible. I ascertained that the general outline of past events as given by me was correct. I then informed Linchwe of Sechele's propositions for peace, and asked him if he would agree to them. Linchwe stated most emphatically that he never would recognize Sechele as his Paramount Chief, nor would he allow white people, sent by Sechele, to prospect for gold in his country. what he saw was that Sechele wants the white people "to eat him up".

Linchwe stated that he had been attacked by Sechele, that Sechele had failed in his endeavour to drive him out, that his people had bled for the country they occupied, and consequently that the land was his

Linchwe informed me that he never offered the slightest opposition to Bakwenas, with or without their cattle, passing to and fro in his country, and he is quite contented they should go on doing so. He said he would not be the first to commence a war with Sechele, but if Sechele came to attack him, he would defend himself, and if Sechele captured any of his cattle posts, he would send after them and try and get them back.

I asked Linchwe what extent of country he claimed. Was it only the land allowed his Father by Sechele? or was it the land he occupied immediately after the fight was over? or was it the land he at present occupied? He stated it was the land he occupied immediately after the fighting was over.

I obtained a promise from Linchwe, that in case of Sechels doing anything likely to cause a breach of the peace, that he would refer it to the Government before taking any active steps himself in the matter.

As soon as I had seen Linchwe, I returned direct to Molopolole, I there received a letter from His Honour the Administrator, dated Vryburg, February 25, 1888. I at once interviewed the Chief Sechele. I informed him of the result of my mission to Linchwe's, and I read over to him portions of the letter received, with reference to the grantee of the concession, coming to terms with Linchwe, the present occupier of the ground. Sechele stated that it was just what he expected from Linchwe, but for all that, he would never give up his right to the ground, and he asked me what I should advise him to do now. I said that the Government had proclaimed a Protectorate over that portion of the country occupied by Linchwe at the request of Sechele, and that up to the present they had always looked on Sechele as having Sovereign rights to the land, I said that I could not advise anything, but that I had no doubt

His Honour would give him his advice as soon as he received my report. Sechele agreed with His Honour in thinking it right that the grantee of the Concession, Mr. Hume, should come to terms with Linchwe the occupier of the land, and that he would request him to visit Linchwe for that purpose, immediately on his return from Kimberley. I told Sechele to be careful that no white person was the cause of any disturbance between Linchwe and himself, as I was certain that it would only lead to the white person being removed from the country. Sechele stated that he would do nothing in the matter until after the reaping of the corn, by which time perhaps Mr. Moffat would have arrived and settled the matter.

Up to the present this is all that has taken place, and I think it best to leave the matter as it stands, until the arrival of the Assistant Commissioner, who perhaps may be able to bring matters to a peaceful settlement....

4.

In 1894, after the findings had been published of the Commission appointed to arbitrate over the boundary dispute between the BaNgwato, BaKwena, and BaKgatla (see above, p. 15), Lentswe and his leading headmen sent a petition to the High Commissioner protesting against the award. Since the petition gives some additional information about the early relations between the BaKgatla and the BaKwena, I have decided to reproduce it here (quoting from a copy shown to me by Isang in 1932).

A petition from the Bakgatla "Reed"
to the English Government, Cape Town.

MOCHUDI, November, 1894.

Your Most Excellency, Sir H. Loch

We, the Reed of the Bakgatla Nation at Mochudi, humbly beg to bring our complaints before you, dear Sir, and please let this reach the ear of Her Majesty the Queen of England and the Home Government.

When the English Government came in this country, we were told that we are now going to live in peace under its protection, and that all the quarrels which very often rises between us native nations shall always thoroughly be investigated before the judgment is prosecuted. But we are sorry as we do not find the same as the above promised in this protection. How is that the Government deny us the right of this country? We know perfectly well that this country is not our fatherland, however, we were called in this country by Sechele when still in the Transvaal. The first men who were sent by Sechele are Moitoi and Tlabaneloe, in 1860. Sechele heard that Kgamanyane, the Chief of the Bakgatla, was much troubled by the Boers, and he said that he has a very big country, where they may come and dwell upon. The Bakgatla did not agree. In 1861 Mogogoe was sent by Sechele again. Kgamanyane confessed that he is quite unwilling to come into Sechele's country, because their forefathers have been enemies to each other, and that the Bakwenas killed some of the Bakgatlas in one of their Kreaals.

In 1862 Sechele sent Magogoe again, telling the BaKgatla that, though their forefathers had been enemies to each other, he is a particular person to his father and he promised that he will live in peace with them, if they only be willing to come. In 1863 Kopane was sent by Sechele with the same message as before. Then at that time the Bakgatla were induced to come into this country. Therefore we humbly inquire from the Government whether we are guilty of coming in this country, being called like that.

The Bakgatla Reed heard very often about the English Government by some of the natives who are under us about its goodness, and we thought to see it in our nation and in our country. We are surprised in seeing that the Government wants to take our country and to give it to Kgama unjustly. When the town Mochudi was established in 1871 Sechele told the Bakgatla that the country he gives them is from Gaberones to Letlakeng, far on that side of the junction of the Crocodile river and Notwani. The Seruruma is the real limit, we know. After the country has been given to us by Sechele, we went to Seruruma with our cattle, and all we hunted there with the Bakwenas without any quarrel.

How is that Kgama did not speak at that time? How is it that he did not quarrel with Chief Sechele when he gave the country to us? Unfortunately there was a war between Sechele and us in 1875 to 1881. The Bakwenas were defeated

/by

by the Bakgatlas, one of our battles fought at the Seruruma. If Seruruma belonged to Kgama, how is it that he did not speak at that time?

We bought this country with the blood and lives of our fellow-men. Since the Protectorate was proclaimed in this country, we spoke nothing to the Government, simply because we wanted to study the Government. We shall be heavily pressed by the Government, and feel very very discontented if that piece of ground is given to Kgama.

From 1885 to 1889, Mokgosi, the Chief of Bamalite hired the Seruruma from us, and did sent his cattle there. Kgama was still alive as now. How is it that he did not speak even one word at that time? How is that the Government does not ask the length of time since that piece of ground belonged to us? For 24 years we were the owners of the ground which the Government wants to give to Kgama.

We, the Bakgatla Raad, request that the case must be thoroughly investigated before the ground can be given to Kgama. During our war with the Bakwenas we took some cattle at the Seruruma and killed one man there. How is it that Kgama did not speak at that time?

Sebele, the present chief of the Bakwenas, stated that the Seruruma is the true limit between us and Kgama. Koenagaeratoe, Moppi, Belame also witnessed the same. We, the Bakgatla Raad, are frightened by the Government in this case. We are not satisfied at all that our country can be taken from us like that. We are glad to be under the English protection, as Kgama and all other nations. How is that the Government presses us like this? That is our complaint to the Government. We hope and believe that the Government will listen and take notice of our cry.

(Signed) Lentsoe K. Pilane,
Chief of the Bakgatla.
(and 29 others).

APPENDIX F

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE PART PLAYED BY
THE BAKGATLA IN THE ANGLO-BOER WAR (1899-1902)

1.

Boer Versions

(a) Extracts translated from: W. van Everdingen, De Oorlog in Zuid-Afrika. Eerste Tydvak. 11 Oktober 1899 -- Maart 1900. 2nd revised edition. Delft, 1911.

(i)(pp. 84-86). "The attack of the Kaffirs, under the command of English officers, at Derde poort. 25 November, 1899."

"To the east of Mafeking there lies in the Transvaal the district of Rustenburg. Right through it runs the Merico, a tributary of the Limpopo, which forms the northern boundary of the Republic. At Derdepoort lay a commando of Boers, about 40 men strong, to protect the boundary, with an eye to the numerous and fearsome Kaffir tribes who dwelt on the other side of the river. The most prominent of these were those of the paramount chiefs Khama, Linchwe, and Segul [Sechele]. The Kaffirs of the first-named chief especially were counted the most warlike of the north, of whom all other tribes were much afraid, they numbered approximately 6,000 men.

On the 25th November, at daybreak, the inhabitants of Derdepoort and the commando of Boers were awakened by the rattle of a maxim. It appeared that 300 English cavalry were posted on the other side of the river, who supported with carbine fire the maxim placed in their midst. At the same time the Kaffirs, who had come over the river at the command of the English officers, fell upon the civilians living there. In an instant eight men, and even two women, were murdered by the savage rabble. Thereafter they also took some 20 women and children as captives with them, drove them through the river, and brought them to Sikwane. While all this was taking place in the village itself, the Boer commando had taken up position in order to bring the maxim under cross-fire, and also (there was no cannon handy) to get the cavalry under fire. Within half an hour the evidently excellently directed rifle fire of Commandant Kirsten and his 40 men had such an effect that the English cavalry fled, leaving the maxim behind. The Boers first got to know of this, however, after the Kaffirs had already brought the weapon back to the English. They then concluded that the attack was finished. They had as yet no knowledge of the murder which had already been perpetrated by the Kaffirs upon peaceful civilians, and expected merely a renewed onslaught from the white enemies. However, scarcely had the English departed, when a horn was sounded, and, in the twinkling of an eye, there appeared from all sides hundreds, nay thousands, of Kaffirs: the gallant commando saw itself surrounded! The Kaffirs shot "wonderfully well, in the same manner as the Boers, and their aiming was excellent, infinitely better than that of the English" -- so Commandant Kirsten himself later testified. But the Boers did not give way, and manfully continued the unequal struggle, until at 10 o'clock in the morning the Kaffirs fled back to their stad with a loss of at least 100 dead. The English had stood on the other side of the Merico calmly watching this barbarous struggle. The Boers, who fortunately for themselves had been able to take up position on hillocks and so could fire safe from being overwhelmed, lost one man killed by the Kaffirs (a member of the Volksraad) and several wounded in the last fight. Beyond this, however, the Kaffirs had found opportunity during the fight to overcome the policemen, who were elsewhere, and to kill nine of them. So that altogether the Boers suffered a loss of 20 killed and several wounded, apart from the captured women and children. The latter, however, returned shortly afterwards. The English commanding officer let the Boers know that he would send the captives back to a place where the Boers could fetch them, and that was actually done. [Foot-note. Being true cattle thieves, the Kaffirs had also looted more than 100 head of cattle from the Boers.]

Scandalous enough as was the fact that Kaffirs had thus been dragged into armed combat with Whites, it was no less reprehensible that it was precisely the English who had committed this crime. Had they not from the beginning accused the Boers of letting Kaffirs fight by their side? And never had they been able to prove this low accusation - until they now took the opportunity of committing a crime, which formed the first of a series of never to be obliterated dark pages in the history of this war. For the attack of the Kaffirs was completely planned and carried out by English officers. The Blacks were forced to cross the river, under the threat that otherwise the maxim would tickle their skins. The commanding officer wrote in his letter accompanying the women and children, "that the Kaffirs had been instructed not to murder any women and children (but what about men?), but that they had, to his regret, got out of hand." In any case this officer honestly acknowledged that he had used the Kaffirs; another, who drew up the official report about this attack, omitted the episode of the Kaffirs... It need not here be said, how infuriated the Boers and their friends everywhere else were when the attack became known. At Pretoria the foreign consuls were again informed, so that they could enlighten their governments about the dishonourable weapons with which England dared to carry on the fight. Meanwhile the Transvaal Government planned to inflict a telling punishment upon the Kaffirs - for now also was it the right thing to ensure justice for oneself. Of any protest on the part of the powers this time also nothing was ever heard."

(ii)(pp. 140 f.): "The Punishment of the Kaffirs at Derdepoort. 22 December, 1899."

"As will be remembered, Derdepoort lies in the northwest of the S.A. Republic, N.E. of Mafeking, on the Marico. After their attack of November 25, the Kaffirs remained quiet until about the middle of December. Then they made yet another attempt to fall upon the Boers, but the latter were alert, although it was night, and they drove off the assailants - which was all the more easy, in that the Boers now had cannon. Nevertheless the Blacks had not finally retreated. On the 21st December they were able to fall upon several burghers on commando near the laager, and wounded three of them, one even fatally. This was the last straw, and General van Rensburg, commanding the Boers, held a council of war. It was decided to attack the Kaffirs "towards daybreak" the following day.

Already that same night Commandant du Plessis with 100 men and two maxims went round the river, to take up position at the foot of a hill, which would be stormed the following day by the remaining burghers. He made a wide detour in order to surprise the Kaffirs. At 4 o'clock in the morning a small ridge was reached, behind which Commandant du Plessis was to take up position, when ... it suddenly appeared that the Kaffirs were prepared, and had made earthworks and trenches. They opened a heavy fire from both flanks upon the burghers, who still had to cross an open mealie field to get to the ridge. Attacked from three sides, immediate action had to be taken [by the Boers]. While the maxims gave a spirited account of themselves - one became for a while useless and in great danger of capture - Commandant du Plessis decided to storm the earthworks of the Kaffirs at any cost. And so it happened: the commandant rode ahead on his horse and jumped right over a mound, followed by forty burghers. Surprised by this audacity, the Blacks for a moment stood astounded, whereupon the Boers began to fire with all their might. Fortunately for themselves, they received strong support from the other section at the right time. This section, protected by the fire of a maxim, had stormed the hill early in the morning and, making use of the ridges on it, had forced the Kaffirs to withdraw there. Then many of the numerous "Kaffir villages" [dwellings] were set on fire, so that the success of the Boers at this point was complete. Meanwhile they had heard how desperate was the position of Commandant du Plessis, and on they hastened, under Commandants Kirsten and Swart, and with a Nordenfelt, to the threatened position. With united force the burghers succeeded in putting the Kaffirs to flight and, when the flag was hoisted, the Blacks scattered in all directions over the level veld. Then the Nordenfelt received its opportunity and made things very warm for them. The burghers had up to now suffered only four men wounded. Subsequently the heavy cannon was directed upon the drift in the

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river, where the Kaffirs were still strongly ensconced. Here the artillery fire was supported by the men of Commandants Eloff and Lombard, who succeeded in expelling the enemy here as well.

Therewith the battle, which had lasted from three o'clock in the morning until 2 in the afternoon, came to an end. The losses of the Kaffirs must have been very heavy, especially also because of the consequences following upon the victory of the Boers. For not content with setting fire to so many Kaffir villages, a commando crossed the drift a few days later, and, after shelling with the cannon, the Boers found that the Blacks had everywhere fled. The Kaffir village Sikwane, the most important of the whole region, was then also set on fire. Therewith the Kaffirs had been given so sharp a chastisement that henceforth they no longer dared to trouble the Boers."

- (b) The following letter was published in a Scottish newspaper (name not given) by Rev. P.B.J. Stofberg, who was the missionary at Mochudi during the War. It is quoted from Pieter Stofberg: Zyn Leven, Arbeid en Afsterven, by W. Fouché (Cape Town, n.d.), pp. 75-78.

"Edinburgh, December 18, 1901.

"Sir, -- I am constrained to add my contribution to the subject of Boer atrocities with regard to natives, which has been discussed so freely in the papers lately. I claim a right to speak on the subject, as I am a missionary labouring among a large tribe, the Bakhatla, in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, a tribe which has had a good deal to do with this sad war.

Immediately after the outbreak of hostilities, Linchwe, Chief of the Bakhatla, received orders from representatives of Great Britain in the Protectorate to attack and drive back the Republican forces should they move northwards. The Chief, however, and his councillors were not disposed to engage the Boer army, because they had always been on the best of terms with their white neighbours across the border.

Knowing what the consequences would be of arming natives and urging them to fight the Boers, I wrote to the Assistant Commissioner pointing out the danger of dragging these men into a war with which they had nothing to do. My remonstrances were fruitless. Ammunition was supplied to Chief Linchwe and his tribe by the British, though the Chief at first refused to accept it, urging as a plea that he had no grievance against the Boers, and therefore no reason for engaging in deadly conflict with them. He was told that unless the ammunition sent was accepted to be used against the enemies of Great Britain he would no longer be considered England's friend. And later on, as I was afterwards told, by threats of imprisonment, and even of death, this chief was driven to take part in the war.

What I foresaw and predicted in my letter to the Assistant Commissioner happened. On or about the 22nd November, 1899, the natives, in conjunction with British troops, attacked a Boer laager at Derde Poort in the Transvaal, and since then these natives have been robbing, plundering, and murdering amongst the Boers, with whom they had always been on the most friendly terms. Women and children were taken prisoners; some were murdered. Several of the most respectable farmers of the Rustenburg district were thus killed and assassinated. Amongst these I may mention Badenhorst, a respected member of the Transvaal Volksraad, the well-known Marthinus Ras, whose skull was battered in by these allies of Great Britain, as he was found travelling across country. In the war of 1880 this man earned the esteem of his countrymen by his ingenious construction of a gun out of the tyres of waggon-wheels. Kiljan met a similar fate. The son of the widow Combrink, who was fleeing from these marauders from her farm in the Pilaënsbergen, was shot on the wagon by his mother's side. The list may be enlarged. These murders were perpetrated in the Transvaal by men who would have remained quiet had it been allowed them. The military, who in the Cape Colony, have had a long and painful innings in hanging the Dutch whom they considered rebels, can throw no stones at the Boers, when they treat native spies, marauders, and murderers, on the warpath, in similar fashion.

This employment of natives in this war has been the cause of much devastation in South Africa, and of nameless misery to the maligned Boer. It has had the most baleful effect, morally and spiritually, on the native himself, who was just emerging from the darkness of heathendom and barbarism to the light of civilisation

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and Christianity. And, above all, it is one of the darkest blots on the pages of the history of the British Empire, whose representatives in South Africa considered the help of the natives indispensable in a war against a handful of farmers. I am sure I have the majority of the British public with me when I condemn this policy, which has now led to such disastrous results. - Yours, etc.,

P.B.S. Stofberg, B.A., B.D.,
Head of Mission Staff.

Mochudi, B.B. Protectorate.

Edinburgh, December 14, 1901.

P.S. - The following may illustrate how the Boers tried to keep natives out of the quarrel: When, after the occupation of Rustenburg by the British, in July, 1900, Koos Magalie, the chief of one of the strongest tribes in the Transvaal, received orders from the British to bring in the rifles and ammunition of his tribe, he came to Commandant du Plessis, who was with a commando in the neighbourhood, and asked what he, as a loyal subject of the Transvaal Government had to do. The Commandant's advice to him was to obey the British. Had the commandant wished to use natives to assist him, he could have had thousands, but the Boers always maintained that the native should be kept out of the war.

P.B.J.S.

(We publish this letter as an interesting confirmation of the letters written to us, describing these incidents, earlier in the war, by Mr. Harvey de Montmorency. - Ed., D.N.)"

2.

Official British Versions

(a) Extracts from the official History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902.
Compiled by the Direction of His Majesty's Government. Vol. III (London 1908), pp. 194 ff.

"The Boers, who lived in daily fear of a native rising, went far to foment what their leaders sincerely desired to avert by repeated acts of aggression, firing on parties of native labourers, looting kraals, and even on one occasion shelling a kopje well within the confines of the neutral territory (November 7th). The native chiefs' conviction that they were to be invaded was thus strengthened, and, pinning their allegiance to the British, they responded by massing their fighting men opposite the Boer detachments, and preparing to defend their frontiers. Further quarrels then arose about the use of water supply, about natives who had been taken prisoners, about the robbery of horses, and other matters.

So high rose the mutual exasperation that on November 10th, Segali, the brother of Linchwe, requested permission to fall upon the Boer laager at Sekwani. This was refused by the Administrator. On the 22nd, Colonel G.L. Holdsworth, who had arrived to take command at Magalipsi on the 4th, having obtained information about the laager in question, in his turn asked leave to attack it, which was granted. To assist him, he was further authorised to make use of Linchwe's men, their co-operation being intended to be confined to services as guides and transport assistants. Although this limitation was not made clear in the telegraphic instructions sent to Holdsworth, that officer, during an interview with the natives prior to the affair, impressed on them the necessity of their remaining on their own side of the border, and that they were not to fire unless ordered. Early on the morning of November 25th, Holdsworth, who had been much misled as to the strength and position of the Boer laager, delivered his attack. At the first shots Linchwe's men got out of hand, crossed the Marico, and fired wildly in all directions, got in front of Holdsworth and ruined his plans. They then attacked the laager, killing some of the enemy, and finally looted the few houses which were scattered along the valley. Holdsworth, therefore, relinquished his attempt, and returned to Mochudi, where the armoured train awaited him.

After this unfortunate occurrence, the friction between Boers and natives naturally increased. On November 30th the Boers shelled the native village of Sekwani, which lay on the left bank of the Marico. Then, in the first week of December, when tidings of the affair of the 25th had reached Nylstroom, the

whole of the Waterberg commando, six hundred in number, under Commandant Lombard, were despatched from that place on a punitive expedition.

On December 18th they attacked and burned the native village, losing eight men, and slaying many of the blacks in a fierce fight around the drift. They then threatened Mochudi, Linchwe's capital, where Holdsworth still was with two hundred of the Southern Rhodesia Volunteers." (The succeeding pages describe how Plumer's column from the north succeeded in clearing away the Boer forces from north of Mafeking and incidentally forced the commando at Deerspoort to fall back.)

(b) Extracts from The Times History of The War in South Africa 1899-1902, edited by L.S. Amery. London 1902.

(i)(Vol. ii, p. 270): "North of Mafeking the Boer forces had meanwhile been kept well occupied. On October 15th (1899), Commandant P.D. Swart, with the 'bushveld' contingent of the Marico burghers, seized Lobatsi. Reinforced by a detachment of Rustenburgers under Piet Kruger, the Boers, 300 to 400 strong, moved north towards Crocodile Pools, about 65 miles north of Mafeking, to meet the armoured train which patrolled the line from Buluwayo. They had not long to wait. On the 18th, the Powerful under Capt. Llewellyn, with a total crew of 47 men and carrying a 7-pounder and a Maxim, came up to the Pools and repulsed them, inflicting some 30 casualties. On receipt of the news of this engagement Cronje at once decided to detach a further strong commando with guns under Snyman to meet this formidable attack from the north. But before Snyman arrived, the Powerful found time to engage Piet Kruger again near the Pools with equally successful results. On the 23rd, the train fell back before Snyman to Gaberones and subsequently to Mochudi, the stad of the powerful native chief Linchwe, and to Magalapye. On the 26th, Snyman occupied Gaberones. A few days later, having gradually realised the insignificance of the force opposed to him, he returned to Mafeking. After his departure, the Boers, on the 31st, wrecked a culvert north of Mochudi, and for a few days held the place till driven out by reinforcements under Colonel Holdsworth, aided by Linchwe's Kaffirs. Piet Kruger, who had made his headquarters at Deerspoort east of Gaberones, occupied his men with occasional skirmishes against the armoured train, and with the looting of Linchwe's cattle."

(ii)(Vol. ii, pp. 297 f.): "North of Mafeking the only events of any importance during these weeks (November) was an attack made on the 8th by the Boers under Commandant F.A. Grobler on some 700 of Khama's Bechuanas, near Selike Kop, whose complete failure effectively safeguarded that part of the frontier from further attempts at invasion. By the middle of the month, the Boers became anxious about the concentration of troops at Orange River for the relief of Kimberley and began to see that their operations in the north had been a mistake. Accordingly, on the 19th, the greater part of the force on the Limpopo went back from Rhodes' Drift to Pietersburg to be there reinforced by additional levies and entrained for Cape Colony. Part of these, under Eloff and von Delwig, were however moved to Deerspoort in consequence of a night attack made upon the Boer leger on the 25th by Captain Llewellyn and his Rhodesians. Several Boers, including Mr. Jan Barnard of the First Volksraad, were killed and a number wounded and taken prisoners. Unfortunately, on this occasion Linchwe's Kaffirs, who were lining their border while the British force operated inside Transvaal territory, crossed the border, contrary to strict orders, and took part in the attack. This and the circumstance that two women were accidentally shot in the dark were the only germs of fact underlying various horrible stories of Kaffir atrocities perpetrated at British instigation, which were freely spread abroad for the benefit of Boer sympathisers in South Africa and Europe."

(iii)(Vol. iv, pp. 199-200): "Even the loyalty of the four great Bechuana chiefs between Mafeking and Rhodesia could not absolutely be relied upon. Khama, indeed, chief of the Bamangwatos, whose capital was at Palapye, was an enlightened and zealous admirer of the English, but his tribe was unwarlike and might be cowed into submission by a display of force from the Boers. Bathoen, chief of the Bamangwaketse, with his capital at Kanye, although also loyal, was also weak. The third, Sebele, had a sub-tribe of questionable loyalty established at Gaberones

on the railway. The fourth was Linchwe, whose tribe of Bakhatlas were good fighters; his territory extended on both sides of the Marico River, and lay partly in the Transvaal and partly in British Bechuanaland, his capital Mochudi being in the latter. His interests, even in peace time, therefore, pulled him two ways; at the beginning of the war his loyalty to the English was very doubtful, and it was chiefly due to a foolish attack by the Boers on his territory that it became confirmed... Still, as long as there was any doubt whether the Bechuanas would assist the Boers in the passage through their territories, Rhodesia could not feel secure from invasion by the south-west. Equally important, too, was it for the purpose of keeping in touch with Mafeking that these natives should be supported in their loyalty by as large a display of force as possible, and it soon became obvious that, besides the force at Tuli, it was necessary to have troops working down the line towards Mafeking. Nevertheless the rule that the natives should take no active part in this war was observed, and the small amount of ammunition allowed them was given solely for the purpose of enabling them to guard their own territory against invasion."

(Footnote: "The attack by Linchwe's men at Derdepoort on Nov. 25th has already been referred to in vol. ii, p. 298. The attack was contrary to strict orders, and on its occurrence Col. Holdsworth immediately suspended his own attack. See below, p. 204.")

(iv)(Vol. iv, pp. 204 f.) "During October and November the Boers forced the British to take their railway line base further and further north, almost as far as Magalapye, 200 miles from Mafeking. On November 6 Col. Holdsworth was sent down to Magalapye with about 200 of the Volunteers and police, and a little later a force of 300 to Mangwe to guard against an invasion by Grobler. Grobler had already made proposals to Khama to let him come up through Palapye to Buluwayo, and on Khama's refusal he bombarded the natives' kraal at Selika Kop, which they had previously vacated; but the expedition to Buluwayo never came to anything. On November 25 Col. Holdsworth (not Capt. Llewellyn, as stated in vol. ii) took about 130 of his men to attack the Boer laager at Derdepoort, in the Transvaal, as the commandoes had been raiding Linchwe's cattle from the Kaffir stad Sekwani across the border. The attack had begun successfully, but unfortunately Linchwe's Kaffirs, who had been strictly enjoined not to come over the Transvaal border, joined in the attack, and Colonel Holdsworth immediately drew off his troops. Next month Du Plessis, reinforced by some of the northern commando under Eloff and Von Dalwig, took revenge on Linchwe by attacking and destroying his stad of Sekwani and by threatening Mochudi. But Colonel Holdsworth was creeping down the line again, and by the beginning of January had taken railhead to within four miles of Crocodile Pools and 87 from Mafeking."

3.

The Case for the BaKgatla

Extract from "Notes on the History of the BaKgatla", by Col. J. Ellenberger (MS. 1937). Col. Ellenberger, Resident Commissioner of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1923-27, was Assistant Commissioner for the Southern Protectorate at the time of the Anglo-Boer War, and was present, as interpreter, when the attack upon Derdepoort was made.

"At the outbreak of the war in 1899, Linchwe (Lentsue as he used to sign himself) had to think not only of his people in the Transvaal, but also of his people residing on the Protectorate side of the border all along the Marico and Crocodile Rivers, from Sikwane (Derdepoort) to the junction of the Notwane and Crocodile at Palla Camp, where they had numberless herds of cattle, and also of the fact that his main village, Mochudi, was only 28 miles from the Transvaal border and that the assistance which he might expect from the British Govt. was, in the then circumstances, somewhat meagre. He had received, in common with the other Chiefs of the Protectorate, specific instructions, at the beginning of hostilities, that they were to take no

part in a war which was solely between White people but that, if the Boers invaded their Reserves, it would be their duty, as loyal subjects of H.M. the Queen, to assist in repelling the invasion.

We evacuated Gaberones during the fourth week of October 1899, and within half an hour of our having done so, the Boers, observing the smoke of the burning stores, entered the place. We retreated northwards, on horse-back and with an armoured train. Linchwe was still quiet then but threw his lot in with ours when the Boers began to help themselves to BaKgatla stock on the Protectorate side. His first active step was when he was told that we intended attacking the Boer laager at Derdepoort, and that he should send regiments to the border there, so that if we met with a reverse they could assist in stopping any pursuit by the Boers into the Protectorate, or, in other words, assist, in terms of his instructions, in repelling an invasion by the Boers. He sent a regiment under his brother Segale, also the Majanko regiment. The ground had not been reconnoitred by any of our officers and we trusted entirely to information given by Segale as to the position of the laager and how to get there.

We rode out from Mochudi railway station, 120 strong, and rested about half-way to Sikwane. Just before the march forward was resumed, the O.C. sent for Segale and told him that the noise of ammunition boots against stones in climbing up towards the laager would be sure to give the Boers the alarm and that the bare-footed Natives should therefore proceed to take up a position overlooking the laager while we attacked from another angle. This of course meant that the Natives had to cross the Marico River into the Transvaal -- a direct contravention of the instructions given to them at the outbreak of hostilities.

On we rode throughout the night (24th November, 1899, if I remember correctly), at that slow military pace so detrimental to men and beasts alike. As dawn approached we were practically on the border, Linchwe's men rapidly covering the ground at a pace which was neither a walk nor a trot but a combination of the two. Then, suddenly, a halt was called: the O.C. declined to advance further unless Segale was there, and Segale had gone with his regiment, vanished in the darkness, placing his men! The grey of dawn was now showing, and I urged the O.C. to move forward before the light of day betrayed us. His reply was: 'My dear fellow, you must remember that I am responsible for the lives of 120 men! ... I shan't move until Segale returns!' I might explain that I was with the column as English-Sechuana interpreter, in civilian clothes, but armed. I got hold of one of Segale's men and sent him to recall that Headman, and we moved forward immediately he came, but valuable time had been lost, and I still wonder to-day that the occupants of the laager did not see us moving to our position -- either they had no sentry or their sentry was asleep!

The order was not to fire until the maxim had found the range. The first rounds were 'short', but the second lot which rattled found the target all right, and some of the Boers, shirts to the wind and lying low on their horses' necks, were soon lost to sight. The Natives overlooking the laager had also opened fire and others had set fire to Commandant Rickert's house and other buildings, but we had no hope of reaching the laager from our position, as the bank of the Marico River offered a sheer drop. A few Mouser bullets fired from the laager soon whizzed past -- I remember two coming mighty close to me after a Native crouching a few paces away had discharged an enormous volume of smoke from an old muzzle-loader, in which he evidently had the utmost confidence as the range was about 1400 yards!

A retreat to Sikwane village was ordered and effected amid little bursts of sand, caused by bullets from the laager, but nobody was hit, one of the officers of the B.P.P. and I dropped into the Marico at the waggon ford, to quench our thirst. We were not the first to do so, judging by the number of Lee-Metford cartridges which had dropped from the bandoliers of those who had bent down for a drink! The Natives extricated themselves from the proximity of the laager and we returned to Mochudi. As we started back from Sikwane I saw Peterse among some Natives: he was hysterical and told me that his wife had been killed that morning. I think he said that she had gone to the window when the first shots were fired and that a bullet had struck her there. The Natives overlooking the laager were under the command of Linchwe's brother Ramono alias RaMatlhodi. Linchwe lost 7 men killed and 24 or 25 wounded in that little affair, which was certainly not to our credit!

After this the Boers naturally burnt Linchwe's villages along the Marico, viz. Sikwane, Mathubudukwane and Malolwane, and Linchwe found it very difficult to find water further west for the cattle which had to be pushed back from the Marico and Crocodile. His blood was now up, and, notwithstanding instructions to the contrary,

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his regiments raided farm after farm, capturing stock wherever possible. After the war, one of the Boers recognized one of his oxen in a span in the Protectorate, and brought an action for the recovery thereof or payment of its value, but the Court ruled that as he was on commando, fighting against the Queen's troops at the time the ox had been captured by loyal subjects of H.M., the ox was the property of the Crown, held by the Native concerned in trust for and during the pleasure of the Crown. There were two similar actions pending at the time and they were withdrawn when the decision in the first case was announced; this put a stop to further claims against the BaKgatla. They were subsequently compensated for their huts destroyed on the border during the war."

APPENDIX G

ISANG'S VIEWS ON TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

1.

[In 1931 a subsidiary training course for Native teachers was held at Mochudi, under the auspices of the Education Department. Among the speakers was Isang, who read the following paper on the history of the Bakgatla, his own career, and the policy he had tried to follow while acting chief.]

The Bakgatla Tribe

This Tribe originally inhabited the Western part of the Transvaal, known to-day as Pretoria District. Although now located in Bechuanaland Protectorate it was formerly one of the tribes widely scattered in the Transvaal, known as Basuto. Undoubtedly to-day the name Basuto immediately suggests the people inhabiting the country known as Basutoland, but anyone who minutely studies the history of the Basuto people will find that they originated from the tribes known by that name who were scattered over the Transvaal, and who included - (1) Bahurutse, (2) Bafokeng, (3) Batlhako, (4) Batlokos, (5) Bakgatla.

The Tribe we are concerned with in this outline is Bakgatla. Tradition tells us that the Tribe came from the North of Africa, unfortunately we are unable to state during what century, but it appears they first began to realise their tribal identity and importance during their sojourn in Pretoria District. Here it was that they began to break up into various sections, viz:- (1) Ba-Kgafela, (2) Ba-Mosetlha, (3) Ba-Manana, (4) Ba-Makau, (5) Ba-Mocha, (6) Ba-Sekwati or Bapedi. All these sections except two still live in the Transvaal. The two outside the Transvaal are at Mochudi and Mosupa respectively.

It is said that the White man made his first appearance in the country about the beginning of the 18th century. It is quite evident that the Bakgatla Tribe had been in the country long before this date, for we have handed down to us the names of many rulers who lived before the 18th century. The names of the chiefs who have ruled the Bakgatla of Kgafela since that time -- they trekked from Pretoria District then -- are -- (1) Kgafela, (2) Masellane, (3) Tebele, (4) Mare, (5) Modimo-koane (acting for) Kgwefane, or Pheto I, (6) Molefe, (7) Makgotso (acting for) Pheto II, (8) Letsebe, (9) Seneloe, (10) Motlotle, (11) Pilane, (12) Kgamanyane, (13) Linchwe, eldest son of Chief Linchwe (14) Kgafele, second son Isang, (15) Molefi.

It was during Chief Pilane's reign that the Matabele of Moselekatse came into the country. Previous to the arrival of the Matabele the tribe had had many civil wars which totally weakened their power to resist any outside invasions. The Matabele were preceded by the Makololo or Sibetwane people. All these people came from the South-East -- also separated from their mother tribes by civil wars and urged by a powerful majority to leave their original country for new fields of adventure.

The Dutch trekkers, like the above mentioned Native tribes, found our people in the Transvaal (Rustenburg District) and claimed that because they had driven the Matabele out of the country, they were therefore the owners of the country by right of conquest. This claim has, from the earliest times, been refuted by our people and the then-ruling chief, Pilane. Chief Pilane died shortly after the Dutch trekkers came into the country, leaving his son Kgamanyane in charge of the tribe. He held the same views as his father regarding the ownership of the tribal land. He contended that, since he had waged no war against the Dutch trekkers, and since the Matabele occupied the country not as conquerors but as passing trekkers, he still retained the original right of ownership of the land. The dispute continued for many years until the position became unbearable. Finally the Tribe, seeing itself unarmed and unfit to fight against the Dutch, evacuated the country. In 1869 Chief Kgamanyane actually left the Transvaal and came, with his people, into the Protectorate. A fairly large section of the Tribe remained behind. About 1884 the Dutch Republic forcibly applied the Location System. The Chief, Kgamanyane, had died and was succeeded by his son Chief Linchwe. Chief Linchwe had, in the meantime, made friends with the Republic as he was at war with the then powerful Chief Sechele of the Bakwena. Chief Sechele had fought the Republic previous to the arrival of the Bakgatla Tribe in the Protectorate and had successfully held his own. Consequently fighting between Linchwe and Sechele was welcome to the Republic, for it was

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evident that, should Lincwe conquer Sechele, the whole country then belonging to both tribes would come under their domain. This hope, of course, became vague as Lincwe, like his forefathers, was not willing to come under "Veurklier".

The Location System was followed by the Squatters' Law, No. 21 of 1895. This law was equally distasteful to the section of the Tribe that had remained in the Transvaal, as it aimed at the unjust breaking up of the Tribe there. No less than 2,000 of them, because of this unjust measure, left the district and came over to their Paramount Chief. The inhabitants of the little Stadt of Moroa are some of those people who left the Rustenburg District because of the Squatters' Law. They had formerly resided on a farm to-day known as Modderkuil (565). Moroa Stadt to-day has a population of about 500 people all of whom had worked for the Dutch people during their stay in the Transvaal, and thus, though under compulsion, had acquired and developed a working knowledge of agriculture. They do not regret having left the Dutch regime. On the contrary they are pleased and happy because they have now more cattle, more land for cultivation and more space and freedom for carrying on their customs than they ever had before or would have had to-day had they been in the Transvaal still.

It is very probable that the present Native Bill, to be discussed during the coming session of the Union Parliament, will produce the same effect on the section of the Tribe still in the Transvaal.

.....

Chief Lincwe died on October 25th, 1924, and is buried at Mochudi. I was born at Mochudi in the year 1884, my father being Paramount Chief and my mother his first wife. I was baptized by the Reverend Beyer of the Dutch Reformed Church.

My earliest recollection is of attending a Mission Church School conducted by a lady-teacher, Miss Murray. We were taught only in the vernacular, and only given religious instruction, we were taught to say our morning and evening prayers and grace at meals. We were taught not to touch intoxicating liquor and I was asked with many others to promise never to drink. I am glad to say I have never broken that pledge.

My first steps in learning, apart from religious instruction, were taken at Maloloane, under Reverend Thomas Phiri, a Mokgatla, in 1892, when I began to learn English Reading. Later I went to Zonnebloem College, on February 11th, 1902, and was admitted into the Fifth Standard. There I remained until 1906. I wished very much at that time to go overseas but the old chief was very much afraid of the sea. At one time I was given permission by the local authorities to go to Wellington High School, my application being supported by the Reverend Neethling of the Dutch Reformed Church, but something happened which made it impossible for me to do so. I passed Standard VI in 1903, having worked in it for five months only. After that I attended High School classes for four years without taking examinations, only obtaining general knowledge.

After my schooling I returned to my country and worked as herd boy at a cattle post for four years, until 1915, coming home during the winter months when Kgotla cases were being tried and attending my father's Kgotla. In 1916, having lost my elder brother I was called on to act as Chief Secretary and Tax-Collector but I did not yet advise the Chief in tribal matters. I helped in Government affairs and had to be present at Kgotla trials every day for the next four years.

On October 5th 1920 the old Chief became very ill and I became Regent Chief at the request of the people and the Chief who died in 1924. From the beginning of my chieftainship I aimed at securing for my people what I clearly saw they most needed. Those requirements and my measures for securing the same I have attempted to summarise as follows:-

1. Christianity for their morals. I supported the Church both financially and morally and did not allow any other sects.

2. Education for their minds. I built schools and sent the best pupils away for further training -- continually spoke about education at tribal meetings and established school committees even before the Government took control. The new National School at Mochudi was built by the tribe under my direction in 1921-23.

3. Material advancement. I introduced better bulls and seed, also double steel ploughs -- encouraged the building of better houses and helped people to find water for their cattle without Government aid -- found markets for their

grain, produce and cattle and controlled sale of kaffir corn to prevent famine -- made laws to prevent my people from wasting money on unnecessary European clothes such as hats, silk stockings, etc., -- bought eight farms for the Tribe in the Transvaal and prevented the denudation of timber -- had three banking accounts for my people and did not allow them to contract debts --- engaged a paid legal adviser in Mafeking to help defend my people in law cases -- laws to prevent young people from drinking kaffir beer.

4. Protection against unscrupulous Europeans. I gave no concessions or monopolies to European speculators -- forbade the entry of Indian traders or "poor whites" in my territory, also the introduction of European liquor -- allowed no incompetent blacksmiths to work for my people.

5. National pride. I organized a national patriotic day -- encouraged home industries such as the making of pots, plates and spoons -- encouraged my people to speak pure Sekgatla -- tried to retain good old native customs in co-operation with Church by removing objectionable features (Boghadi or Lobela, Go botha mophato are not now objected to by Mission) -- forbade my people to beg even at railway line or stations.

Before closing this outline I should like to suggest that the following points should be considered as a possible continuation of the foundation I have attempted to build.

(a) European Principal for school and to develop educational work amongst the Bakgatla under the guidance of the Inspector of Education. The Principal must also be a man of energy and vision, also we require more fully qualified teachers. Boarding accommodation for boys and girls. An experimental farm for agriculture in our reserve.

(b) Government should work out cattle embargo or find another good market, also reduce railway rates on grain, and produce, and should complete my water scheme by putting in another twenty holes on the Reserve. Over £4,000 should be spent on the water.

(c) Government should make a survey of the health of my people.

I gave up my Regency in October 1929, upon the coming of age of the young Chief.

2.

Nihil sine labore

[Address delivered by Isang, who himself chose the title, before the Bantu Studies Circle of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in 1933.]

This saying is not a dogma imposed by me or accepted by my people because of any inborn desire to labour, particularly as labour is understood to-day in the sense of getting out the maximum amount of energy for useful production, be it from man, ox or machine. At my first contact with the realities of my life as they presented themselves to me, when the weight of responsibility for the wellbeing of my tribe fell on my shoulders, this dogma forced itself on my mind.

It was comparatively easy until then for the Mokgatla to live. We had fought a war with a neighbouring tribe -- the Bakoena -- and won the territory as warriors.

Fired with enthusiasm, we fought again during the Anglo-Boer War.

A warrior, it will be admitted, does not work. Hunting supplied most of our needs, and value was measured by the quantity of wildebeest riums at 2/6d. each, which to-day can hardly be given away at 6d. each; and while wild ostriches sold at £7.10.0 each, to-day their value is nil. Indeed, there was a ready market for practically all our assets.

The law of the wide open country, free from police restrictions, boundaries and railway line, gave enough scope to the enterprising; and many were the riches amassed sine labore by our people.

It was the hunter's characteristics and instincts that functioned so well in unison with the backward state of the civilization of those days. And no wonder that my good father even in former years looked askance at the march of progress which slowly but surely started penetrating into his territory and people. Men were hunters, but it would seem that even hunting was done more for the pleasure of it, since there were plenty of Masarwas who could do it just as well if not better, if given the necessary guns. These Masarwas were part and parcel of the

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country conquered by the Bakhatla, and as a gesture of further friendship, Chief Sechele of the Bakwena at Molepolole, sent special messengers after declaration of peace in 1882 to my father, ceding to him all the Masarwa in the conquered territory, including the guns in their possession, as Bakwena property. There is no doubt that even the hunting was done by slaves, or rather, by the inferior members of the Tribe.

The advent of the European culture with all its implications affecting, as it did, every aspect of our lives: traditional, religious and economic, has fully justified my father's and grandfather's fears. They probably instinctively felt the radical change that this culture would make in their lives and they were quite unprepared for it. It was the fear of the unknown. It was this fear no doubt, that prompted my father to strongly object to the telegraph and subsequently to the Railway line being constructed through his territory. Yet nothing stopped this culture from marching steadily on, and at the beginning of this century, the man who feared and hated a railway through his territory in 1897, realised that the inevitable must happen, and conquering his fears, changed his tactics to a course of preparedness. He must have realized that this civilization was coming to stay and decided that his sons must be ready to meet this fearless and unconquerable beast the white man calls civilization, and accordingly sent his sons to Cape Town in search of the necessary education.

In 1902, I had my first glance of this white civilization. I at once realized how negligible my father's grand conquering armies were to the better equipped white man's army, just then returning from the three years war.

It gave a fillip to my ideals and I knew then that not in the strength of my father's armies but in adapting ourselves to this same civilization lay our future as a nation; and indeed, my further impressions justified this conviction. The four years of my stay in Capetown had undoubtedly shaped my future life and policy.

My personal impressions were strengthened further by those unforgettable lectures of the beloved and venerable Father Bull, who brought home to me the duties and responsibilities of a Chief. These impressions augmented by experience at the cattle post during 1907 to 1911, and at my father's Khotla as observer during 1911 to 1916, were the material that shaped my policies when I became regent in 1921. I think it is of importance to remind my audience that the problems of a regent are different from those of an actual chief. The position of a regent differs also to that of a President in so far that a President after the time of his office lapses, is still allowed to participate in the deliberations for the welfare of his people. It has unfortunately, however, become a tradition with the native tribes in South Africa, to look with suspicion on a regent.

On my taking over the Chieftainship from my father, I found that there were already an accumulated number of problems facing the people, owing to the changes that have taken place around them and their inability to adapt themselves to those changes. It was quite apparent to me from the beginning that if any reform was to be introduced to adapt ourselves, as a tribe, to the new world conditions, the people must have some insight of the world around them; understand the forces that encircle them closer and closer as time goes on, and enable them to react to these forces. This understanding was lacking and was, in fact very conspicuous by its absence. It became quite obvious that this understanding must be instilled and with the greatest possible speed. But as much as I would have liked to impart knowledge overnight and catch up even one step with the outside world, I saw that I had to start from the very beginning and build up the structure for this knowledge as a sound foundation. This has to a great extent been made possible by the fact that my people, having been trained as warriors, displayed good discipline and loyalty, and thus, in the first year of my regency in 1921, I started building the first elementary school on the top of a very picturesque hill, where every brick and stick used for the building was carried up by our men and women of all ranks alike. The school system from the day of its opening has gradually expanded and has of late years been strengthened by the provision of an inspector of education in the Protectorate, and further by my becoming Supervisor of Schools in the Territory, in 1932.

That is as much as I was able to contribute towards the education of my people during the few years of my regency, and although I would have liked to see more development in this connection, I am happy to feel that a beginning, and a sound one, has been made.

/This

This, however, was not the only problem that faced me. There were others that were just as important as the former, and their solutions were overdue in the same way as that of education. While the whole system of education was the foundation on which the young generation was to be built up, the onward march of European Civilization was engulfing and vitally affecting the very existence of my tribe. Our neighbours developed intensive activities in the economic field. We slept on our wildebeeste riems, hoped for the abnormal prices of cattle that existed during the war, and sighed for the return of an ostrich era. Protective duties and various embargoes were found necessary by the Union Government, and indirectly and sometimes even directly, we were vitally affected. All these situations arising out of the intensive development of industries in the Union found us totally unprepared.

Gradually our cattle lost their value. While continually deteriorating, due to various causes, an embargo was placed on 80 percent. of our cattle from entering the Union -- our only market.

As I said, we were caught unawares. I was faced with a big problem that could only be solved by a tremendous united tribal effort.

Here, in more than anything else, I required the co-operation of the whole tribe. And here, also, as much as I would have liked to improve our stocks by witchcraft overnight, I found the only and quickest way to do it would be by adapting ourselves to the modern methods adopted by the white people.

A long and tedious process! The very characteristics of the tribe must be changed. To build up an education system proved a comparatively easy matter, for this reason, children do not possess tradition, nor are they born fanatics, whereas grown up persons are. I very often found strong opposition to my contemplated schemes, which were the adoption of the white people's methods in ranching and agriculture. I realised that I would not be able to show immediate results for the necessary effort, and that this might damp the enthusiasm of even the most arduous, but I also realized that a beginning must be made even though the term of my office as regent would not allow for any great change.

In 1921, it was quite obvious that cattle was and would in future be our most important if not almost the only source of income. Our territory was already feeling the lack of water. This is incidentally one of the causes of the deterioration of our cattle, and if we are to start improving our herds, our first task must be to provide adequate water supplies.

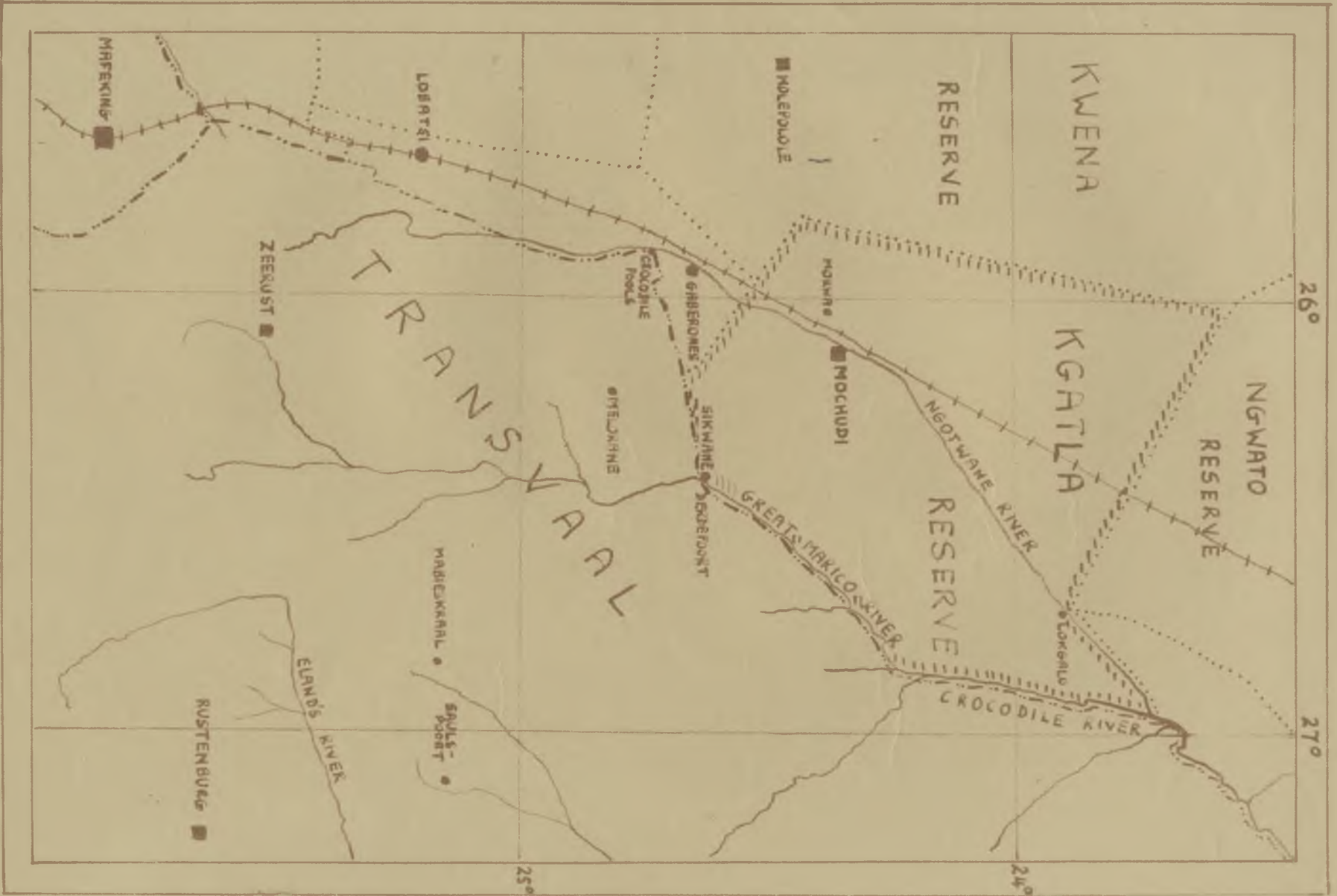
Here again I found one of our tribal customs responsible for the absence of water holes and wells. All water wells are communal property, and few were the benefactors who would dig wells for others to use. To remedy this, I decided to give a right of ownership to surrounding locality of the well for grazing purposes, for 10 years, to people who would make wells away from the ground already used by the masses of the people. I am glad to state that immediately a number of wells were successfully sunk. This reform of course relieved individuals only. The people as a whole still required water. I accordingly decided to embark on a bigger scheme, as a result of which seven tribal boreholes, with a total capacity of approximately 200,000 gallons of water per 24 hours, were in operation within four years. It must be remembered that boring for water in our unsurveyed country without the assistance of a geologist is a very difficult undertaking. In addition, I began to extend and deepen the many natural water pans in my territory, for which purpose a number of dam scrapers were acquired, and the Motlhege pan within six miles of Mochudi is there to prove the success of this part of the general water supply scheme, and it is only to be hoped that these scrapers, a wonderful and useful implement the white people invented, will again be made use of for the same purpose in the near future.

Simultaneously with the dam scrapers, I found the double furrow plough of advantage and a time saver as well as the improved steel single furrow plough, instead of the wooden beam that held the field and almost became an institution. Perhaps my education system had some influence on the search for time savers to relieve the young generation as much as possible from field and other work in order to give them more time for school. Anyway, I considered it of great importance to increase the acreage under cultivation, and made as much propoganda as possible to popularise the double furrow plough. Civilization held out a great attraction to a good many of my people in the shape of double beds -- especially to those of our young men working in or returning from Johannesburg after work. More often than not they were followed by this symbol of civilization, although very often these beds are used as ornaments only.

It might have been going a little too far, but I decided to try and change the double bed for a double furrow plough. I accordingly held a meeting at Krugersdorp attended by my people there working on the Rand, and pointed out the necessity of agricultural implements as well as the anomaly of having a square bed in a round hut; and as a result I think I am quite safe in saying that the Bakgatla possess more double furrow ploughs than many a tribe with double and even treble its population.

I would like to mention here that my object in increasing the acreage was decidedly not for the purpose of increasing the crop of corn for Beer making, but rather it was to encourage planting mealies and beans for the market. These cereals were hardly ever planted until then. Corn was the only cereal food we planted and this, my father in his experienced wisdom, prohibited to sell unless we had three years reserve. The only way corn was allowed to be sold was in the shape of Beer. This law had its good as well as its bad effects. For one thing, there were too many night Beer parties with their consequent fights.

To keep our heads above water, I required sober assistance and co-operation, and I therefore instituted total prohibition for the young generation, and prohibited night beer parties; but perhaps civilization will, in time, substitute some other diversion for this evil, otherwise the problem is not yet solved, and will most probably not be solved by any drastic laws by the ruling authorities.



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