

foundations of the world, while the firmament rattles *and crackles*
like ~~cracked and~~ *the crashing of colossal crockery or a* detached sheet of iron, *beating against a stone wall*. After
a drought, these manifestations are often accompanied *and exaggerated*
by destructive and fatal discharge of electricity.
Then there is a sudden down pour of rain like a sluice,
often accompanied by a whipping breeze, or a tempestuous
gust of wind, and at other times by a heavy fall of
large hailstones. Suddenly, for a time, all is chaos,
din and tumult. But as suddenly, it may be, all is *calm*
and peace. The rain stops as suddenly as it commenced;
the truant sun peeps through the clouds to smile rogu-
ishly upon the earth, which lately so dry and parched,
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gullies have now become a *succession* of pools and lakes,
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There has been a gradual decrease of rainfall and
moisture throughout Bechuanaland over scores, and perhaps
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cosmic and irremediable causes, but it seems to be indis-
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by human agencies - by the axe, by veld fires and other
wise - over a period of many years, has greatly increased evap-
oration, and thus led to, or helped the gradual process
of dessication. (Theal: History & Ethnography of S.A before
1795 vol.1 p. 57).

Very close to the eastern border of Bechuanaland,
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foundations of the world ,while the firmament rattles and crackles like the crashing of colossal crockery, or the beating of a large ~~piece~~ sheet of iron against a stone wall . After a drought these manifestations are often accompanied and exaggerated by destructive and fatal discharges of electricity . Then there is a sudden down pour of rain like a sluice , sometimes ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ heralded ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ by a whipping breeze , or a tempestuous gust of wind , and sometimes accompanied by a heavy fall of large hailstones which, in a few minutes covers the country side with a white carpet, several inches thick on the hills and plains, but very much thicker in the glens and dales. (Capt. W.C.Harris:-The Wild Sports of S.A-p.79) Suddenly, for a time, all is chaos, din and tumult. The convulsion of the elements dwarfs, drowns and dominates every thing else in nature , and animal and man crouch in consternation and awe . But as suddenly, it may be, all is calm and peace . The rain stops as abruptly as it commenced , the truant sun peeps through the clouds to smile roguishly upon the earth, which lately so ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ dry and parched , is now converted into an inland sea ; the dongas and gullies have now become a succession of pools and lakes , while the recently parched water courses and ravines have become transformed into roaring cascades and dangerous currents . (Capt. W.C.Harris:The Wild Sports of Southern Africa p.79)

water can be found at no great depths below the surface, that is at depths varying from twenty-five to about one hundred and fifty feet. But the further one goes westwards and northwards, and away from rivers and valleys, the deeper the levels to which water recedes, until, over extensive areas in the north-west, it becomes impossible to strike water at any depth.

INHABITANTS:

A correct idea of the relative positions of the several tribes which form the Ba-Tswana group of the Bantu race is essential for the clear understanding of the history of any of them.

Proceeding from the Orange River in the south, we first have the territory known as Griqualand West, named after the people of mixed Dutch and Hottentot blood who settled there at the close of the eighteenth and the opening of the nineteenth Centuries. Beyond them are the Ba-Tswana tribes, disposed in more or less regular order northwards.

1. BA-TLHARO: In the Kuruman and Vryburg Districts, their Chief centres of aggregation being ^{in the former} at Kuruman, Maruping, Manyeding, Tsee and Madibeng. *Bathabos 4 in the latter District.*
2. BA-TLHAPING: In the Vryburg and Kuruman Districts; their chief centres of aggregation being Taung, Phokwane and Matlapeng.
BAGA-MAIDI: A clan of the Ba-Tlhaping with their chief town at Manthe. *4000*
3. BA-ROLONG : Between Vryburg and the Ramatlabama tributary of the Molopo River *and composed of*
 - (a) Ratlou/Ba-Rolong at Ganyesa, Morokweng and Konke as chief centres; also at Khunwana, Kraaipan, Madibogo, Motsitlane and Setlagole, and further north-west at Phitshane, Tshidilamolomo and Mabule.
 - (b) Tshidi Barolong, who have their chief town at Mafeking, and large villages at Modimola, Dithakong, Mareetsane and Mosite.
 - (c) Seleka Ba-Rolong at Thaba Ncho in the Free State.
 - (d) Rapulana/Ba-Rolong with their chief towns at Lotlhakane (or Reitfontein) and Bodibe (or Polfontein) in the Transvaal.
4. BA-HURUTSHE: in the Marico District, with their chief towns at Dinokana, Manwane (or Gopane) Motsweding, Moshaneng, *Braaklaagte and Leeuwfontein.*

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3. **BA-ROLONG :** Between Vryburg and the Ramatlabama tributary of the Molopo River
 - (a) **Ratlou:** Ba-Rolong at Ganyesa. Morokweng and Konke as chief centres, also at Khunwana, Kraaipan, Madibogo, Motsitlane and Setlagole, and further north-west at Phitshane, Tshidilamolomo and Mabule.
 - (b) **Tshidi Barolong,** who have their chief town at Mafeking, and large villages at Modimola, Dithakong, Mareetsane and Mosite.
 - (c) **Seleka Ba-Rolong** at Thaba Ncho in the Free State.
 - (d) **Rapulana:** Ba-Rolong with their chief towns at Lotlhakane or Reitfontein and Bodibe or Polfontein in the Transvaal.
4. **BA-HURUTSHE:** in the Marico District, with their chief towns at Dinokana, Manwane (or Gopane) Motsweding, Moshaneng

(Witkleigat) Brasklaagte and Leeuwfontein.

5. BA-NGWAKETSE: between the Ramatlabama tributary of the Molopo River and the Metse-mashwaana tributary of the Notwane. Chief town Kanye. (pop 15,000)

6. **Ba-KWENA** : Between the Metsemashwaana tributary of the Notwane and Lophephe. Chief town Molepolole, 3,000 other villages at Ntswa-ja-Tau Lotlhakane, Gabane and Gathamaga.

7. **BAGA-MALETE**: Opposite (i.e in the same latitude as) and to the N-East of the Ba-Ngwaketse. Chief town Ramotswa. 5,500.

8. **BA-TLODWA** : Opposite (i.e on the same latitude as) and to the east of the Ba-Kwena, on the Notwane River. Chief town Gaborone, (Gaborones).

9. **BA-KGATLA (OF KGAFELA)** Opposite and to the north-east of the Ba-Kwena, on Notwane River. Chief Town Mochudi 9000 and large villages at Malalane, Sikwane, Rasesa and Odi.

Ba-kgatla (of Manaana). Within the Ba-Ngwaketse territory, and between them and the Ba-Kwena. Chief town Moshapa.

10. **BA-NGWATO** : OR **BA-MANGWATO** between Lophephe and Botletli River. Chief town Serowe. 25,000 Figures from Shapiro: Tswana Law p 8. They have also large villages at Serowe, Shoshong Mahalapye, Phalapye, Madinare. In the Ba-Ngwato are incorporated the:-
BA-KALAKA, whose chief towns are Totome, and Rasebolai Nol near Francistown.
BA-Khurutshe, chief towns Shashe and SBatiti
Ba-Kaa: chief town Shoshong.
Ba-Tswapong on the East of Phalapye, chief towns Chadibe.
Ba-Birwa: who live on the Shashe and have as their town Bobonong.

11. **BA-TAWANA**: Between Lake Ngami and the Zambesi, their chief town is Maun.

12. **BA-KGALAGADI**: Generally to the west and north-west of all the foregoing Ba-Tswana tribes. They chiefly inhabit the Kgalagadi desert, their chief town in Lehututu.

13. **BA-SOTHO** : In Basutoland.

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPLORATION OF BECHUANALAND:

~~The country north of the Orange River known as Bechuana-~~

The country north of the Orange River known as Bechuana-land remained a closed book for generations after the nations of Europe were founders with the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the East and West East belts of South Africa and the valley of the Zambesi. The Batswana were so

At the end of April 1820, the reverend John Campbell, missionary
and traveller, passed through ~~/K~~ ga-Khunwana (which he calls Mashow for
~~goxa~~ go-Ratlou). He has left much valuable information in his "Travels
in South Africa" though marred somewhat by his cryptic, and at times
atrocious spelling of names and places.

1820

To
you

Owing to the frequent attacks of Bushmen, Korana and Bakgalagadi marauders, the Barolong did not remain long at Dithakong. They moved northward to Ganyesa, then to Mamusa (now called Schweizer "eneke), and then to Mosite, halting one, two or three seasons at each place to plant corn and melons for food.

During the sojourn of the Barolong at Mosite, their king Ratlou (1770) was afflicted with small pox, and he succumbed to it. The disease had been endemic in South Africa since the out-break of 1755, but during these years there was an exacerbation in ~~the~~ ^{its} incidence ~~six~~ ^{times}, and many people died from it.

Pending the formal naming of Ratlou's successor, Seleka, the eldest of the deceased king's brothers became regent.

Ratlou left several sons. Of these, the most important were Seitshiro, ³ Modirwagale, ² Maribaneng and ⁴ Mokalaka. The king, their father, had no sooner died than there commenced a series of plots and counter plots in connection with the succession. These led to chronic discord, and culminated in complete disruption.

Seleka, the old regent, seconded by Modirwagale, and supported by the great majority of the nation, nominated Seitshiro as the rightful heir and successor of Ratlou. *This was not first accepted by all sections after several months or perhaps years* But a section, headed by Mokalaka *openly* opposed this, and designated Maribaneng (commonly called Mariba) then a minor. *This happened at Mosite about the year 1773 or*

At this time the Barolong were preparing to move to Setlagole, their former home, with a view to permanently settling there. Sooner than go with the main body, however, or recognise Seitshiro as king, Mokalaka took charge of the youthful Mariba, and with his following, went off to Morokweng (Cwaing) to establish a Mariba dynasty, separate ^{from} and independent of the Seitshiro following. Meanwhile Seitshiro, like his father was cut off by the small-pox at Mosite. (c 1774)

In accordance with custom, the regency now passed into the hands *the eldest surviving brother of the dead chief, in this case* of Modirwagale, and he conducted all the Barolong *to Setlagole (1775) or supporters of Mariba or supporters of Mariba*

Mariba had ~~long~~ not been long at Morokweng, when he also ~~was~~ fell a victim to the ravages of small pox. Some of the people who had followed him from motives of personal attachment now returned to join the main body of the Barolong at Setlagole. Mokalaka who had now succeeded to the paramount position at Morokweng, was much ^{annoyed} aggrieved at this

and immediately called out an expedition to punish them, and, if possible to crush Modirwagale, ^{at the same time} and usurp the position of king of all the Barolong. In this he failed dismally, He was driven back to Morokweng. But forces which were ultimately to help Mokalaka's cause were afoot.

invade Setlagole
deserters

2. In the town of Setlagole was a young and beautiful woman, ^{Mma-Maremela by name} a widow of the late king Ratlou. The princes of the Ratlou ward looked upon her as their legitimate heritage, but she cast her eyes and affections further afield. She loved Rapulana the least of Ratlou's ^{half} brothers, much to the chagrin and resentment of Modisa, Ratlou's full brother who fancied her. Modisa's jealousy ^{acted} led him to insult Rapulana. The wards of the sons of Tau - Ratlou, Tshidi, Makgetla, Seleka and Rapulana - formerly united in spirit, and one in purpose, now ^{became} divided on the woman issue. The Tshidi, Makgetla and Seleka sections stood solidly together behind Rapulana and ~~was~~ against the Ratlou ward.

Makgetla became the virtual King of the Tshidi, Makgetla, Seleka and Rapulana clans.

1. During their peregrinations, the Barolong had been much pestered by their old and bitter enemies, the Bataung (or Digoja) whose bands hung on behind them ~~and~~, stole their cattle, and killed the herds. Now at Setlagole, a punitive expedition was sent out ^{by Modirwagale} to destroy the Bataung robbers. In the skirmish that followed, ^{near Mamusa,} Tshidi, Tau's second son was killed 1775-1775.

Tshidi He was survived by his principal wife - Maecwana - and her issue in two daughters and a son - Tlhutlwa. The latter was therefore the heir and natural successor of Tshidi as chief of the Tshidi's ^{or district} ward, or family group. But Tlhutlwa was only a minor when his father was killed, so Makgetla, his next of kin, who was also head of the Makgetla family group, was appointed regent for Tlhutlwa. He even married Maecwana - Tshidi's principal widow, and Tlhutlwa's mother. Makgetla thus united his own followers and family group to those of Tshidi while acting for the young Tlhutlwa.

3. ^{Following Modisa's deliberate insult to Rapulana} There was serious commotion, ^{passions flared} and assegais were drawn. Makgetla killed Modisa during the ^{ensuing} fight. ^{The Ratlou families under Modirwagale were defeated} The Ratlou families under Modirwagale were defeated towards Morokweng where they went to seek help from Mok...

After this, ^{to avoid any further} to avoid any more blood shed, the Tshidi, Makgetla, Seleka and Rapulana family groups withdrew from Setlagole and their Ratlou kinsmen ⁱⁿ 1777. This event, and this date marks the end of the corporate existence of the Barolong as a nation. The family groups now separated from each other, and continued their existence as ^{more or less} independent tribes.

- 1. Ratlou Barolong } members of the Mokalaka / Seleka clan under Modirwagale
- 2. Tshidi Barolong } united under Makgetla
- 3. Makgetla
- 4. Seleka } under Seleka
- 5. Rapulana } under Rapulana

Show the genealogical relationship of the Bakwena, the Bangwato and the Bangwaketse, and adduce clear traditional proof that these three are sister tribes, the case is completely different with Ba-Rolong. There is not a vestige of tradition to show how they are related to the other Becwana tribes except perhaps the Batlhaping. We have to fall back upon the anthropological, morphological, linguistic and geographical evidences to show that the Ba-Rolong are descended from the same parent stem as the other Becwana tribes. They were already long separated from the main group, and has attained a tolerable degree of tribal anatomy, distinctness, and consciousness, when, in the grand outward migration of the Bantu, their fore-fathers reached the northern banks of the Limpopo River in the 14th and 15th. centuries.

RELATION WITH OTHER BECWANA

Of the several Becwana tribes, those most closely related to the Ba-Rolong are the Batlhaping. The relationship is to be seen in the manners and customs of the two tribes, in their dialectic speech, and in their physical conformation. The two tribes appear also to have come to South Africa in close association and earlier than the other Becwana tribes, excepting the Bakgalagadi, who were the earliest arrivals of the Bantu stock. After a long period of years, the Bakgalagadi were followed by the Batlhaping, not on whose heels followed the Barolong. But the most significant fact, and perhaps the clearest proof of the relationship of the two tribes is that both the Barolong and the Batlhaping had until comparatively recent times, the same symbolic designation, animal diety or totem (seboko or seroto), their sacred animal being "tholo" the eland.

TOTETISM (SEBOKO)

It may be interesting and instructive to notice here the implication of the Becwana symbolism.

All savage tribes have some animal or some other natural object with which they identify themselves. They honour it while at the same time they abhor it (go bina), and they defy it while they also regard it with holy fear. They look upon it as exercising both a protecting and a malicious influence. It becomes quasi-religious

at Mafeking, where it sat on the 15th of January up to the 10th of February 1866, and again from the 11th till the 21st of May. The act was not only allowed but was actually defended by the Administrator Sidney Shippard, although the new township was within three-quarters of a mile of the Bareleng town, and its planting within such close proximity was strongly opposed by the Bareleng chiefs, the Wesleyan missionaries, and some members of the Commission itself, like Lieutenant A. E. Haynes, the secretary of the Commission, who resigned for that reason. It was pointed out to the Commission that, in any case, there was no pressing need for a European township at Mafeking for reasons either of trade or defence.

Chief Montshiwa was particularly displeased. He wished that the European township should be built at Rooigrond, ten miles to the south-east of Mafeking. He feared that his people might become demoralised by too close a contact with all classes of Europeans, and the evils of civilisation. He also feared that his powers as chief, might be interfered with, and that encroachment upon his territory, and expropriation of some of his lands might eventually follow. And indeed a large tract of Bareleng land was soon after appropriated for the European township and town commonage on the east. When these things were first mooted, Montshiwa wrote a letter of protest to Her Majesty's government - on the 13th of March, but he received no satisfaction. In November 1866, Sir Hercules Robinson, the Governor of Cape Colony came to Mafeking, and also approved of the site of the European township. The Secretary of State remarked rightly or wrongly that it was now too late to consider the propriety of removing the European township.

In May 1866, the chief Montshiwa, supported by the Rev Owen Watkins of the Wesleyan Society wished to go to England, to lodge his protest in person before the Queen, but he was dissuaded from this step by the Administrator - Sidney Shippard.

The Land Commission allotted the Bareleng 660 square miles of territory on the Molepe River, the so-called Molepe Reserve. This worked out at an average of nearly 70 acres per head of the population. The balance of the land was divided into farms, most of which were given to deserving European claimants. Some of them were granted

is suddenly swallowed up in dense masses of black ominous clouds, from which, anon, brilliant flashes of lightning blaze forth either in forked zigzag tongues, or in blinding shimmering sheets immediately followed by deafening crashes and tremendous peals of thunder, whose reverberations seem to shake the very foundations of the world, while the firmament rattles & crackles like ~~the~~ ^{crashing of Colossal Croquet or a} detached sheet of iron, ^{beating against a stone wall}. After a drought, these manifestations are often ^{exaggerated} accompanied by destructive and fatal discharge of electricity.

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From Kolobing Scholtz sent commandant P. Schuller with a patrol to ...
apode at ...
Montshiwa averred that he had no political or personal grievance against Sechele, and that in fact he was on friendly terms with him. Scholtz threat-

ened to settle with Montshiwa on his return from Sechele".
On 30th August after defeating Sechele and killing about ninety of his men (30th Aug)
 The Boer commando duly returned from the Bakwena territory with a booty

of 3000 cattle, several goats, eleven horses and two wagons. Between two and three hundred women and children were taken prisoners, and were distributed among the Dutch farmers under conditions closely simulating slavery. Theal has put himself to much pain and trouble in trying to justify this patently unjustifiable action. On the return of the commando in September 1852, Peter Scholtz carried out his threat "to settle with Montshiwa." The latter was summoned to appear before the council of war in ~~three~~ ^{five} days to answer for his disobedience. He was told that he was a vassal of the Boer Republican Government, and that as his Barolong were ~~d~~ treated differently from other Africans with whom the Boers had dealings in that they were neither asked to pay taxes, nor to furnish Boer farmers with free labour - the so-called labour tax - they were therefore expected to render military service whenever the ^government required it. These were amazing claims, and Montshiwa wrote to Scholtz, to tell him again that he was no vassal but an independent king, that he was no tenant, but that he occupied his own country. He also sent his brother Molema, and his missionary Ludorf to place these representations clearly before ~~Schultz~~ Commandant Scholtz. But Scholtz was obdurate and would have no discussion. He wanted Montshiwa to unconditionally surrender his kingly rights and his guns. Here was a sudden and tragic termination of the peace and friendship that had existed for fifteen years between the Dutch emigrants and the Barolong. Where was Hendrik Potgieter who understood the foundations of this friendship? ^{was far away} Alas, he lay seriously ill at the Zoutpansberg, ^{where of renal dropsy} and died soon after, in ^{in battle with Makapan's tribe} March 1853. The Barolong were suddenly confronted with an inexorable situation, and were called upon to make a momentous decision. They had to make a choice between giving up their cattle, ~~their~~ their guns and their freedom to the Boers, and becoming vassals, or else fighting for their lives, their liberty and their property, or thirdly, abandoning ^Lotlhakane and finding a new place of abode, where they could retain their national identity and self-determination. Rather than surrender, or rather than fight, the Barolong of Montshiwa with the usual Becwana timidity abandoned Lotlhakane on the 15th of September 1852, and went westward to Setlagole fifty miles away .

CHAPTER 1.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

Bechuanaland is the central plateau which lies between the Orange River in the south, and Lake Ngami in the north, and between (the Late German) South-West Africa in the west and the Transvaal in the East.

Except on the north and south, there are no salient geographical features that mark off Bechuanaland from adjoining countries. It has a fairly uniform elevation of 3,500 ft to 4,500 feet, with a general slope westwards and southwards as may be seen in its drainage or river system.

It is a country of sub-tropical climate and moderate fertility. There is a gradual transition from the luxuriant pasture lands of the Transvaal on the East, to the stunted vegetation of the Kgalagadi Desert on the West, while at the same time the country becomes more and more sandy, as it does also from south to north, and finally loses itself in the waterless wastes of the north and west, called the Kgalagadi Desert. (Keane: Africa vol. 11. pp 342-344).

Closely skirting the Transvaal western border and extending from the Orange River to the Zambesi is a broad strip of fairly well-watered and moderately fertile country within and along which the Ba-Tswana have settled in colonies and constellations. Here their principal towns, whose sizes amazed the early explorers, are to be found disposed in groups of somewhat linear style and at more or less regular intervals. Proceeding from the south, northwards these are Kuruman, Taung and Bothithong (Motito). Ganyesa and Morokweng, then Mafeking, Khunwana, Motsitlane and Setlagole, next come Kanye and Ramotswa, then Molepolole, Gaborone and Mochudi, and further north, Shoshong. Serowe and Phalapye.

Along the line of these groups of towns, the natural road to the North for explorers, missionaries and traders has suggested itself and along that northern road, the railway and telegraph lines have naturally followed.

The country is remarkably flat in the south. Further north it is somewhat varied by the presence of low hills, which the Ba-Tswana, because they know no better, call mountains.

The soil is red, sandy and porous, often mixed with gravel, and in the south has an extensive substratum of limestone. At and around Mafeking, the underlying rock is a red sand stone conglomerate on the north and east of the Molopo River, while to the south and eastwards there is an abundance of underlying limestone, stretching for thirty to forty miles into the Transvaal. (E.P. Mathers; Zambesie p. 180). The prevailing gravel stone (breccia), coarse granite, lime stone and sand stone substrata are often arrested here and there by upcroppings (dykes) of igneous formations, which form boulders of all sizes and shapes, occasionally placed in intriguing positions and relations, as if some prehistoric giants had been amusing themselves at play, or deliberately setting problems for generations yet unborn to solve how, when and why the boulders were placed at such quaint positions.

Geologically, Bechuanaland does not differ materially from the rest of South Africa. The Nama System or rocks predominates, with possibly an intrusion of the Transvaal system, making the Transvaal Nama system. Thus are to be found breccias, shales, sandstone, quartzites, gneisses and bands of conglomerates of reddish tint, which not infrequently are gold-bearing, while igneous intrusions occur at many places. (Hamilton and Finlay—Outline of Geology pp 81, 103).

FLORA:

The vegetation of Bechuanaland is subtropical. The country is well covered with a variety of grasses (Lichtenstein: Travels Vol: 1. p 200) which a Mo)Tswana boy distinguishes and enumerates without effort to the number of fifteen to twenty. Pasturage is good during the rainy summer months, especially along the valleys and on the plains, and cattle and sheep increase at a fairly good rate.

The Ba-Tswana grow millet (*sorghum caffrorum*) and maize, as well as a great variety of peas and beans melons, marrows and pumpkins, all which thrive well in the wet summer months.

There is an abundance of trees of all varieties, especially in the north, but the commonest species is certainly the thorny acacia - camel thorn or mokxu (*acacia giraffa*). Haak thorn or mokala (*a. horrida*) the mimosa or mookana (*a. atomiphylla*), the waag'n-beitje thorn or mookgalo (*a. detinens*) The vaal bosh or mhatlha *Tarchonanthus* also abounds, while along the valleys and water courses are to be found the karee boom or mosilabele and the weeping willow or mogokare. (*Salix*).

As one advances northwards, the variety of trees increases, the individual trees become larger and the forests denser, until the latter become impenetrable beyond Molepolole and Serowe.

Northern Bechuanaland has always been more densely wooded than Southern Bechuanaland, but the difference has become much greater since 1870, as the result of the destructions of trees in the south to provide fuel for industries and machinery of the Kimberley diamond works.

The denudation of the forests has been such that between Kimberley and Vryburg, there are hardly any trees to be seen for miles adjacent to the transport roads and the railway.

FAUNA:

Bechuanaland is a sanctuary for animals and birds. Animal and Bird life varies on the whole directly as vegetation. In historic times, in fact, within the memory of living men, all manner of antelope, large game and wild animals - springbok, gemsbok, blesbok, wildebeeste, elands koodoos, giraffes, zebras, elephants, leopards, lions, rhinoceroses and hippopotami as well as wolves, hyenas jackals, boars, porcupines baboons and monkeys - roamed all

B A R A L O N G.Distribution:

The Ba-Rolong constitute, if not the most important tribal group, certainly one of the most important tribal groups of the people known as the Becwana (bechuana).

The Becwana people extend uninterruptedly over Southern Africa from the Orange River in the south, to the Zambesi River in the north, and from the eastern border of (the late German) South West Africa inhabited chiefly by the Damaras, to the western boundaries of Zululand, Natal and Swasiland, corresponding to the Drakensberg mountains.

The Ba-Rolong mainly inhabit Southern Bechuanaland, extending on the south from the latitude of Vryburg where they are continuous and contiguous with the Ba-Tlhaping, to beyond the Ramatlabama spruit on the north, where they merge into the Ba-Ngwaketse.

The chief centres of aggregation of the Ba-Rolong are along the Molopo River and its affluents, at Mafeking, Phitsane, Setlagole Lotlhakane, Kunana, Ganesa and Morkweng. They are to be found also eastwards in large groups, and living under their communal system at Polfontein (Bodibe) in the Lichtenburg district, and at ThabaNcho in the Orange Free State.

While the Becwana people are estimated to number about 1,000,000 comprising some ten to 15 composite tribes; Ba-Rolong, Natlhaping, Bakgalagadi, Bahurutshe, Batlharo, Bawena, Bangwato, Bangwato, Bamangmato, Bangwaketse, Bakgatla, Batawana, Batlokwa, Bamalete etc. that section of them known as the Ba Rolong constitute about one eighth of this number or about 125,000. The Barolong are thus the largest tribal group of the Becwana, being larger even than the composite compound of tribes that form the Bamangwato (100,000)

ORIGIN

The Ba-Rolong are like the other Becwana people in that they must have originated with them from some common parent tribe in the dim past. But while we can give the dates and details of the separation of the Batawana from their Bangwato progenitors, while we can.....

proceeding and a malignant influence. It becomes
regard it with not only fear. The Lok wood
the same time they spend (land) and
fect with which they identify themselves
VII average tribes had some of the same
bligation on the Becwana and Lam.
It may be interesting and instructive
TOLELISM (SEBOKO)

(Seboko or seroto), their sacred animals
recent times, the same symbols and
that both the Bafalanga and the Bafalanga
haps the clearest proof of their descent
heels followed the Bafalanga. But the
years, the Bafalanga were followed by
the earliest allies of the Bafalanga. Af
than the other Becwana tribes, adding
also to have come to South Africa in
speech and in their physical conformation.
in the manners and customs of the two
to the Bafalanga and the Bafalanga.

The two tribes appear
in their dialectic
to be seen

RELATION WITH OTHER BECWANA

of the several Becwana tribes, those most closely related
and Tsch. centuries.

tribe reached the northern banks of the Limpopo River in the 14th

when in the 15th century the Bafalanga, their forefathers

a collection of tribes of various degrees, and consequently

They were already long separated from the main group, and had

are descended from the same parent stem as the other Becwana

Limpopo and Zambesi valleys show that the Bafalanga

We have to turn back upon the anthropological, morphological,

related to the other Becwana tribes except perhaps the Bafalanga.

Bafalanga. There is not a single instance to show how they are

three are sister tribes, and there is completely different with

and the Bafalanga, and indeed clear ethnological proof that these

show the ethnological relationship of the Bafalanga, the Bafalanga

In November 1884, Samuel Moroka was tried at Bloemfontein for the murder of Tshipinare, but was ~~was~~ discharged on the ground that the Orange Free State courts had no jurisdiction, as Thaba Ncho and the Barolong at the time of the crime were independent.

Samuel and his followers then went to Basutoland, and Chief Letsie gave them ground at Koro to live on.

The second wife or house, the third and subsequent wives

or houses/were similarly acquired and named after this manner and of the passing of marriage portions, and not according to the time sequence order. All these secondary wives were collectively called "basadi ba serethe" (wives of the heel) . The essential feature in which they differed from the "greatwife" was that while the choice of the "great or ~~fix~~ principal wife" devolved upon the father and ~~uncle~~ maternal uncle of the young man , often in his minority, and was a family affair, subsequent and inferior wives were usually chosen by the man himself , and need not receive the sanction of his family . In this way, they were from the outset labelled 'second class' , and indeed, cohabitation with them was not necessarily nor usually preceded by the passage of ~~the~~ marriage portions . Nay, this

~~his-xxxxxxxx-seeens-sen--~~ Motase was something of a scapegrace , who earned for himself an unenviable reputation for inhumanity . After a charge of attempted murder, ^(A.W.Hodson: 'Trekking the Great Thirst p.70) he left his father and settled at Kokong about 1910^o . ^{but at a later date (1927) went to live at Makopang on lower Motape.} Seitsang second son - Motase - tired of life among the Ba-Kgalagadi, and returned to Ganyesa, ^{eldest.} while the youngest son - Tselakgopo - ^{soon after his father's death.} died at Khakhea in the Kgalagadi desert . ^{but highest rank}

1921. After living at Hukuntsi for the period of a whole generation, Seitsang died there in ^{April 1908} 1921, very near where his father Kegakilwe had died more than half a century before . He was a crabbed ^{emul, unscrupulous & cynical} old man whom most people ^{had reason} seemed to regard with suspicion - a restless and turbulent character , ^x (A.W.Hodson: 'Trekking the Great Thirst pp 32,70) , a faithful follower of Mokalaka and Motshware . ^{his nephew Kegakile, from app. Motshware's offspring, took over to Ganyesa}

1931. Seitsang was succeeded by ^{his nephew} Petro Makgobi as ^{when Kegakile} chief of the Ba-Rolong clan at Hukuntsi . Like a true desciple of ^{Petro Makgobi} Seitsang, he left the Kgalax Lehututu area in 1931⁵ and returned to Phitshane in the Union of South Africa in 1931, when the Bechuanaland Protectorate Government gave the Ba-Kgalagadi their Magna Charta or right to be ruled by chiefs of their own ethnic origin, and ~~to be subservient only to the Government~~, and not by foreigners like Seitsang and Makgobi , and to pay taxes, and be subservient only to the Government , and not to other fellow subjects like the Ba-Rolong, who had long enough lorded it over the spiritless Ba-Kgalagadi .

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