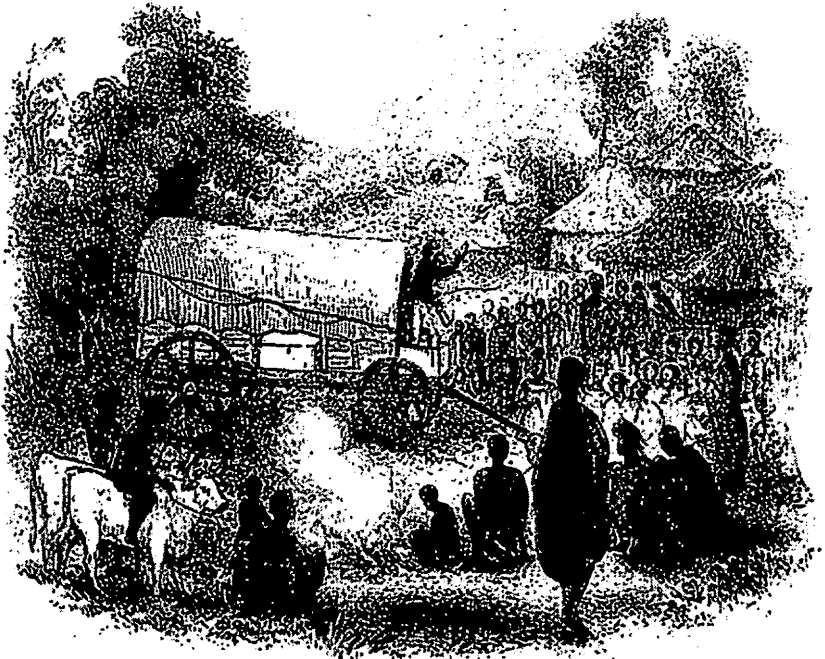


MISSIONARY
LABOURS AND SCENES
IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA;

BY
ROBERT MOFFAT,

TWENTY-THREE YEARS AN AGENT OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN THAT
CONTINENT.

FOURTH THOUSAND.



Preaching at Moshou's Village.—(See page 536.)

With Engravings, by G. Baxter.

LONDON :
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One day, while describing the day of judgment, several of my hearers expressed great concern at the idea of all their cattle being destroyed, together with their ornaments. They never for one moment allow their thoughts to dwell on death, which is according to their views nothing less than annihilation. Their supreme happiness consists in having abundance of meat. Asking a man who was more grave and thoughtful than his companions what was the finest sight he could desire, he instantly replied, "A great fire covered with pots full of meat;" adding, "how ugly the fire looks without a pot!"*

My situation was not very well suited for study, among a noisy rabble and a constant influx of beggars. Writing was a work of great difficulty, owing to the flies crowding into the inkhorn or clustering round the point of the pen, and pursuing it on the paper, drinking the ink as fast as it flowed. The night brought little relief, for as soon as the candle was lighted, innumerable insects swarmed around so as to put it out. When I had occasion to hunt, in order to supply the wants of myself and people, a troop of men would follow, and as soon as a rhinoceros or any other animal was shot, a fire was made and some would be roasting, while the others would be cutting and tearing away at the ponderous carcase, which is soon dissected. During these operations they would exhibit all the gestures of heathenish joy, making an uproar as if a town were on fire. I do not wonder that Mr. Campbell once remarked on a similar occa-

* A rough kind of earthenware made by all the Bechuana tribes, and which stands the fire well.

sion, that from their noise and gestures he did not know his travelling companions. Having once shot a rhinoceros, the men surrounded it with roaring congratulation. In vain I shouted that it was not dead, a dozen spears were thrust into it, when up started the animal in a fury, and tearing up the ground with his horn, made every one fly in terror. These animals were very numerous in this part of the country; they are not gregarious, more than four or five being seldom seen together, though I once observed nine following each other to the water. They fear no enemy but man, and are fearless of him when wounded and pursued. The lion flies before them like a cat; the mohohu, the largest species, has been known even to kill the elephant, by thrusting the horn into his ribs. This genus is called by the Bechuanas, *chukuru*; and the four distinct species have more than once been pointed out to me when they have all been within sight, the *mohohu*, *kheitlua*, and the *borila* or *ken-egyane*.* The last, though the smallest with the shortest horns, is the most fierce, and consequently they are the last that retire from populous regions, while the other species, owing to their more timid habits, seek the recesses of the interior wilds.

Being in want of food, and not liking to spend a harassing day, exposed to a hot sun, on a thirsty plain, in quest of a steak, I went one night, accompanied by two men, to the water whence the supply

* Not having brought with me my memoranda of names, character and instincts of game, I cannot recall the name of the fourth, which is distinguished from the *kheitlua* by the position of its ears and the formation of its head. There are also other marks by which the natives distinguish them.