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THE PORTUGUESE IN SOUTH AFRICA

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIVE RACES BETWEEN THE RIVER ZAMBESI AND THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

BY

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FORMERLY KEEPER OF THE ARCHIVES OF THE CAPE COLONY AND AT PRESENT COLONIAL HISTORIOGRAPHER

WITH MAPS

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PREFACE

A VERY few years ago, when I prepared my large History, the expression "South Africa" meant Africa south of the Limpopo. Mainly through the ability of one man—the Right Honourable Cecil John Rhodes—that expression to-day means Africa south of the Zambesi. The event which I took as an initial point—the arrival of Van Riebeek in Table Valley in April 1652—has thus come to be incorrect for that purpose, the true starting-point now being the arrival of Da Nhaya in Sofala in September 1505. I have therefore written this volume, in order to rectify the beginning of my work.

As Bantu tribes that were not encountered by the Dutch, and that differed in several respects from those south of the Limpopo, came into contact with the Portuguese, it was necessary to enlarge and recast the chapters in my other volumes descriptive of the South African natives. I need not give my authorities for what I have now written concerning these people, for I think I can say with truth that no one else has ever made such a study of this subject as I have.

The Portuguese in South Africa are not entitled to the same amount of space in a history as the Dutch, for they did nothing to colonise the country. I think that in this little volume I have given them their just proportion. In another respect also I have treated them differently, for I expended many years of time in research among Dutch archives, and I have obtained the greater part of my information upon the Portuguese by the comparatively trifling labour of reading and comparing their printed histories. I should not have been justified, however, in issuing this volume if I had not been able to consult the important documents which the Right Honourable C. J. Rhodes caused to be copied at Lisbon for his own use.

With this explanation I commit the volume to the good will of those who are interested in South African affairs.

GEO. M. THEAL.

CAPETOWN, *January*, 1896.

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CHAPTER I.

EARLIEST INHABITANTS OF SOUTH AFRICA: BUSHMEN AND HOTTENTOTS.

In the present condition of geological knowledge it is impossible to determine whether South Africa has been the home of human beings as long as Europe has been, but it is certain that men have roamed over its surface from an exceedingly remote period. Stone implements shaped by human hands have been found in situations where they must have lain undisturbed for a very long time if reckoned by years. None of these implements—whether arrowheads, scrapers, knives, axes, or digging weights—were ground or polished, as chipping and drilling comprised all the labour that was bestowed upon them. They were the products of the skill of man in the lowest stage of his existence. Work-shops where they were manufactured have been found in various places, and to some of these the raw material, or unchipped stone, must have been brought from a considerable distance. The artisans may have lived there permanently, or, what is more probable, some superstition may have been connected with the localities. At these factories a quantity of stone from which flakes have been struck, some raw material, a very few finished articles, and a great many broken

ones usually lie wholly or partially hidden by drift sand or mould, and it is generally by accident that they are discovered.

The most ancient implements were as skilfully made as those in use by one section of the inhabitants—the Bushmen—when Europeans first visited the country, showing that at least in the mechanical arts there had been no advance during many centuries. This is not surprising if the physical condition of South Africa be considered. The land rises from the ocean level in terraces or steps, until a vast interior plain is reached. Deep gorges have been worn by the action of water, in some places internal forces have caused elevations, in other places depressions, and everywhere along the margins of the terraces distortions may be seen. There are no navigable rivers, and the coast is bold and unbroken. The steep fronts of the terraces, which from the lower side appear to be mountain ranges, and the absence of running water in dry seasons over large surfaces tended likewise to prevent inter-course, not only with the outer world, but between the different parts of the country. The rude people were left to themselves, without that stimulus to improve-ment which contact with strangers gives. There was no necessity to exert the mind to provide clothing or habitations, for the climate is mild, and even on the elevated interior plain, though the nights in winter are sharp and cold, snow never lies long on the ground. Like the wild animals, man on occasions of severe weather could retire from exposed situations to sheltered and warmer localities.

At length, however, another class of human beings

appeared on the western and southern coasts. Where they came from no one can say, nor how they reached South Africa. Completely isolated, few in number, in many respects differing greatly from Bushmen while in others closely resembling those people, their presence here is as yet an unsolved mystery. That their occupation is only modern is, however, tolerably certain: that is the time that has elapsed since their arrival is but short compared with the long period that Bushmen have been living in the country. The probability seems to be that a party of intruding males of some light-brown or yellow race took to themselves women of Bushman blood, and thus gave origin to the people whom Europeans term Hottentots. There are difficulties to be encountered by this supposition, as, for instance, the possession of oxen and sheep by the Hottentots; but, upon the whole, it offers a more likely solution of the mystery than any other conjecture yet made.

At a period still later than the coming of the Hottentots, a gradual pressure of the Bantu tribes of Central Africa into the southern part of the continent began to take place. When they crossed the Zambesi cannot be determined, but probably it was earlier than the commencement of the Christian era by some hundreds of years. They did not extend beyond the Limpopo, however, until a much later date. The traditions of all the tribes south of that river, none of which can be more than a few centuries old, point to a distant northern origin, and in some instances particulars are given which prove the traditions to be in that respect correct.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century of our era

when Europeans first had communication with natives of South Africa, the belt of land comprising the lowest and the second terrace along the western coast from about Cape Cross southward to the Cape of Good Hope, and thence eastward to the Bashee river, was occupied — though thinly — by Hottentot tribes. The same people were to be found about the lower courses of the Vaal and Modder rivers and along the banks of the Orange from the junction of the Vaal to the sea. They were not known either on the eastern side of the continent or elsewhere in the interior.

The Bantu at that time occupied the choicest parts of the country north of a straight line from Cape Cross to Port Natal, and extended south of that line into the territory now known as Basutoland and also along the eastern coast as far as the Bashee river. They were not to be found in the remaining portion of South Africa.

Bushmen roamed over the entire country south of the Zambesi from sea to sea, and were the only inhabitants of the rugged mountains and arid plains between the Hottentot and Bantu borders. As they could hold their own fairly well against the Hottentots, they were more numerous along the western and southern coasts than along the eastern, where the Bantu had better means of exterminating them.

The skull measurements show great differences in the three races, though the number—especially of Hottentot skulls—carefully examined by competent men is as yet too small for an average to be laid down with absolute precision.

What is termed the horizontal cephalic index, that is the proportion of the breadth of a skull to its length,

is given by Professor Flower, conservator of the museum of the royal college of surgeons of England, from thirteen Bantu specimens as 73 to 100. The highest in this series is 76·8, and the lowest 68·4. Dr Gustaf Fritsch, from thirteen specimens, gives the average as 72 to 100. The highest in this series is 78, and the lowest 64·3. M. Paul Broca, the French authority, gives the average of his measurements as 72. Thus the Bantu are dolichocephali, that is people whose skulls average in breadth less than three-fourths of their length. The average horizontal cephalic index of white people is 78·7.

Of Hottentots, only four that are certainly genuine specimens are given in Professor Flower's volume. The average horizontal cephalic index of these is 72·7, the highest being 75, and the lowest 70·3. Dr Fritsch had also only four skulls which were certainly those of Hottentots. The average horizontal cephalic index of these he found to be 72·6, the highest being 77, and the lowest 65·9. M. Broca gives this index from his measurements as 72. The Hottentots are thus certainly true dolichocephali.

Of genuine Bushman skulls, Professor Flower gives the measurements of five. The average horizontal cephalic index is 76·6, the highest being 78·4, and the lowest 75·7. Dr George Rolleston, professor of anatomy in the university of Oxford, in an appendix to Oates' *Matabeleland*, gives the measurements of six Bushman skulls in the museum of the university. The average horizontal cephalic index he found to be 75·7, the highest being 81, and the lowest 70. Dr Fritsch measured five Bushman skulls, and found the

average horizontal cephalic index 74·2, the highest being 78·5, and the lowest 69·5. M. Broca found the average of his measurements as low as 72, but it is doubtful whether his specimens were not Hottentot skulls. It would appear that the Bushmen are on the border line separating the dolichocephalic from the mesaticephalic races, the breadth of skulls of the latter averaging between three-fourths and four-fifths of the length.

The cranial capacity, or size of the brain of each, is given by Professor Flower as: Bantu 1485, Hottentot 1407, and Bushman 1288 cubic centimetres. The average brain of a European is 1497 cubic centimetres in size. Dr Rolleston found the average cranial capacity of his six Bushman specimens as low as 1195 cubic centimetres, and all other recorded measurements place these people among the extreme microcephalic or small-skulled races. The Hottentots in this classification are mesocephali, a name applied to races whose average cranial capacity is between 1350 and 1450 cubic centimetres, and the Bantu, like Europeans, are megacephali or large-skulled.

The alveolar index, index of prognathism, or the slope of a line from the top of the forehead to the point in the upper jaw between the insertion of the front teeth, is an important characteristic. According to the angle which this line makes with the horizontal plane of the skull, races are classified as orthognathous, mesognathous, or prognathous. In this classification the Bushman comes nearest the European, his face being much more vertical than that of either of the others. Between the Hottentots and the Bantu there is scarcely any difference.

A very marked feature of the Bushman skull is the smallness of the lower jaw and the want of prominence of the chin. In this respect he is among the least advanced of all races. The lower jaw of the Hottentot is much better formed, but is not by any means as massive as that of a member of the Bantu family or a European. The skulls of these South African races also differ from each other and from those of Europeans in many particulars which are only intelligible to professional anatomists. This subject can be studied in special works, and it is not necessary therefore to enter more deeply into it here.

The greatest differences between the three divisions of people who lived in South Africa in ancient times are now believed to be in the constitution of their minds, but early observers did not detect these. The variations which they noticed were chiefly the following:

Bushmen: frame dwarfish,[1] colour yellowish brown, face fox-like in outline, eyes small and deeply sunk, head dotted over with little knots of twisted hair not much larger than peppercorns, ears without lobes, stomach protuberant, back exceedingly hollow, limbs slender; weapons bow and poisoned arrow; pursuits those of a hunter; government none but parental; habitations caverns or mats spread over branches of trees; domestic animal the dog; demeanour that of perfect independence; language abounding in clicks and in deep guttural sounds.

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[1] Occasionally among the Masarwa, or Bushmen of the Betshuana country, individuals over five feet and a half in height are found, but these are to a certainty mixed breeds. They show Bantu blood in their darker colour as well as in their general form and size.

Hottentots: frame slight but sometimes tall, better formed than Bushmen, but back hollow, head scantily covered with little tufts of short crisped hair, cheeks hollow, nose flat, eyes far apart and often set obliquely, hands and feet small, colour yellow to olive; weapons assagai, knobkerie, bow and poisoned arrow, shield; pursuits pastoral and to a very limited extent metallurgic; government feeble; habitations slender frames of wood covered with skins or reed mats; domestic animals ox, sheep, and dog; demeanour inconstant, marked by levity; language abounding in clicks.

Bantu: frame of those on the coast generally robust and as well formed as that of Europeans, of those in the interior somewhat weaker, head covered closely with crispy hair, cheeks full, nose usually flat but occasionally prominent, hands and feet large, colour brown to deep black; weapons assagai, knobkerie, shield, and among the northern tribes battle-axe and bow and arrow; pursuits agricultural, pastoral, and metallurgic; government firmly constituted, with perfect system of laws; habitations strong framework of wood covered with thatch; domestic animals ox, goat, sheep, dog, barnyard poultry; demeanour ceremonious, grave, respectful to superiors in rank; language musical, words abounding in vowels and inflected to produce harmony in sound.

THE BUSHMEN, TERMED BY THE HOTTENTOTS SANA, BY THE BANTU ABATWA.

The pigmy hunters, who were the oldest inhabitants of South Africa, received from the first European colonists the name of Bushmen, on account of their

preference for places abounding in bushes, where they had a wonderful faculty of concealing themselves.

Their language has not been examined very carefully, except by the late Dr Bleek and by Miss L. Lloyd whose researches have only partly been published. It is known, however, to be very low in order as a means of expressing any but the simplest ideas, and to be divided into a great number of dialects, some of which vary as widely as English from German. Many of its apparent roots are polysyllabic, but there is a doubt whether some of these are not really composites. It is so irregular in its construction that the plural of nouns is often formed by reduplication, as if we should say "dog dog" instead of "dogs," and sometimes a plural idea is expressed by a word which has nothing in common with the one which expresses the singular. Yet there is an instance of a dual form in the first personal pronoun. In none of the dialects has any word for a numeral higher than three been discovered. Dr Bleek and Miss Lloyd found that the language could be represented in writing, though to the ear it sounds like a continuous clattering combined with hoarse sounds proceeding from the depths of the throat.

The Bushmen inhabited the mountains and deserts, and carried on incessant war with the Hottentot and Bantu tribes. A cave with its opening protected by a few branches of trees, or the centre of a small circle of bushes round which skins of wild animals were stretched, was the best dwelling that they aspired to possess. Failing either of these, they scooped a hole in the ground, placed a few sticks or stones round it, and spread a mat or a skin above to serve as a roof.

A little grass at the bottom of the hole formed a bed, and though it was not much larger than the nest of an ostrich, a whole family could manage to lie down in it.

The ordinary food of these people consisted of roots berries, wild plants, locusts, larvæ of ants—now commonly called Bushman rice by European colonists—reptiles, birds, and mammalia of all kinds. No chance of plundering the pastoral tribes of domestic cattle was allowed to escape them. They were capable of remaining a long time without food, and could then gorge immense quantities of meat without any ill effects. They were careless of the future, and were happy if the wants of the moment were supplied. Thus, when a large animal was killed, no trouble was taken to preserve a portion of its flesh, but the time was spent in alternate gorging and sleeping until not a particle of carrion was left. When a drove of domestic cattle was stolen, several were slaughtered at once and their carcasses shared with birds of prey, while if their recapture was considered possible, every animal was killed. Such wanton destruction caused them to be detested by all other dwellers in the land.

Their weapons were bows and arrows. The bows were nothing more than pieces of saplings or branches of trees about four feet in length, scraped down a little, and strung with a thong of raw hide or a cord formed by twisting together the sinews of animals. The arrows were from twenty to thirty inches in length, made of reeds pointed generally with bone, but sometimes with sharp stone flakes, and with triangular iron heads whenever these were taken from Hottentot enemies. The arrowhead and the lashing by which it

was secured to the reed were coated with a deadly poison, so that the slightest wound caused death. The arrows were carried in a quiver made of the bark of a species of euphorbia, which is still called by Europeans in South Africa the kokerboom or quiver tree. They were formidable solely on account of the poison, as they could not be projected with accuracy to any great distance, and had but little force. In after years the colonists considered their clothing ample protection at fifty yards distance. The Bushmen made pits for entrapping game, and also poisoned pools of water, so that any animal that drank perished.

They used stone flakes for various purposes, but took no trouble to polish them or give them a neat appearance. Their knives, scrapers, and awls for piercing skins were commonly made of horn or bone. There was a stone implement, however, which was in general use. It was a little spherical boulder, from three to six inches in diameter, such as may be picked up in abundance all over the country, through the centre of which the Bushman drilled a hole large enough to receive a digging-stick, to which it gave weight. With the tools at his disposal, this must have required much time and patience, so that in his eyes a stone when drilled undoubtedly had a very high value. On it he depended for food in seasons of drought, when all the game had fled from his part of the country. Drilled stones from an inch to three inches in diameter have occasionally been found in tracts of country once inhabited by Bushmen, but from which those savages have long since disappeared. None so small as these have been noticed in use in recent times. It is

conjectured that they were intended as toys for children.

There is no record of a European having ever seen a Bushman manufacturing stone implements, and no one appears to have made inquiry into the matter until it was too late to derive any information from the people themselves. When they were first met, they had such implements in use, and wherever they lived such implements are still to be found, hence it is assumed that they made them.

But a few weapons of stone much larger than those ordinarily used by Bushmen have been picked up in South Africa in situations where it is supposed they cannot have been left by individuals of the stronger Hottentot race, though not in places indicating that they were of great age, and these have given rise to an opinion that the country may once have been occupied by more robust savages. Traditional stories have been gathered from Bushmen themselves, in which they speak of an older race. But weapons made by Hottentots for their own use could have been taken from them and removed to a great distance by their puny enemies, and the traditions probably refer to the supplanting of one horde by another in a particular locality. There is no other evidence that the Bushmen were not the earliest inhabitants of South Africa, and this seems altogether too slight a foundation to build a theory upon.

People in a low condition of society do not use clothing for purposes of modesty, but to protect themselves against inclement weather. And as the Bushmen were hardly affected by any degree of either heat

or cold that is experienced in this country, whether on the plains in midsummer or on the mountains in midwinter, the raiment of the males was usually of the scantiest, and in the chase was thrown entirely aside. At the best it consisted merely of the skin of an animal wrapped round the person. Adult females wore a little apron, and fastened a skin over their shoulders in such a way that an infant could be carried on their backs. Both sexes used belts, which in times of scarcity they tightened to assuage the pangs of hunger, and whenever they had the means they rubbed their bodies with grease and clay or soot, which made them even more ugly than they were by nature.

When the men expected to meet an enemy, they fastened their arrows in an erect position round their heads, in order to appear as formidable as possible. But they never exposed themselves unnecessarily to danger, and tried always to attack from an ambush or a place that would give them the advantage of striking the first blow before their adversaries were aware of their presence. A poisoned arrow, shot from a little scrub in which a Bushman was lying concealed, often ended the career of an unwary Hottentot traveller.

The Bushmen wore few ornaments, not because they were careless about decorating their persons, but because it was very difficult to obtain anything for the purpose. They were without metal, and in the vast interior, as they knew nothing of commerce, they could not obtain sea-shells. Yet some of them contrived to make necklaces, which were worn by the men and women, not by the children. They cut little circular disks of tortoise and ostrich egg shells, drilled holes in them, and

strung them on thongs. It requires some reflection to realise the amount of patient labour expended upon a single ornament of this kind, manufactured with stone implements. In other cases they made grooves round the teeth of animals, and then strung a number together.

A consideration of how much value such a simple implement as a tinder-box would have had to these people may aid in enabling a European to comprehend the life that they led. They knew how to procure fire by twirling a piece of wood round rapidly in the socket of another piece, but the preparation of the apparatus took much time, and a considerable amount of labour was needed to produce a flame. Under these circumstances, it was a task of the women to preserve a fire when once made, and as they moved their habitations to a large animal when it was killed, instead of trying to carry the meat away, this was often a very difficult matter. Sometimes it necessitated carrying a burning stick fifteen or twenty miles, or when it was nearly consumed, kindling a fire for the sole purpose of getting another brand to go on with. No small amount of labour would therefore have been saved by the possession of a flint and a piece of steel.

These wild people lived in small societies, often consisting of only a couple of families. They were vindictive, passionate, and cruel in the extreme. Human life, even that of their nearest kindred, was sacrificed on very slight provocation. They did not understand what quarter in battle meant, and as they never spared an enemy who was in their power, when themselves surrounded so that all hope of escape was gone, they

fought till their last man fell. Their manner of living was such as to develop only qualities essential to hunters. In keenness of vision and fleetness of foot they were surpassed by no people on earth, they could travel immense distances without taking rest, and yet their frames were so feeble as to be incapable of labour.

They possessed an intense love of liberty and of their wild wandering way of life. Hereditary chieftainship was not recognised by them. It sometimes happened that the bravest or most expert of a party became a leader in predatory excursions, but his authority did not extend to the exercise of judicial control. Each man was independent of every other. Even parental authority was commonly disregarded by a youth as soon as he could provide for his own wants.

They were firm believers in charms and witchcraft, and were always in dread of violating some custom—as for instance avoiding casting a shadow upon dying game—which they believed would cause disaster. A Bushman would not make a hole in the sandy bed of a river in order to obtain water, without first offering a little piece of meat, or some larvæ of ants, or an arrow if he had nothing else, to propitiate the spirit of the stream. And so with every act of his life, something had to be done or avoided to avert evil.

Their reasoning power was very low. They understood the habits of wild animals better than anything else, yet they believed the different species of game could converse with each other, and that there were animals and human beings who could exchange their forms at will, for instance that there were girls who could change themselves into lions and baboons that

could put on the appearance of men. The moon, according to the ideas of some of them, was a living thing, according to the notions of others it was a piece of hide which a man threw into the sky. In the same way the stars were once human beings, or they were pieces of food hurled into the air. As well might one attempt to get reasons for their fancies from European children five or six years of age as from Bushmen: the reflective faculties of one were as fully developed as of the other.

Dr Bleek and Miss Lloyd obtained from several individuals prayers to the moon and to stars. But everything connected with their religion—that is their dread of something outside of and more powerful than themselves—was vague and uncertain. They could give no explanation whatever about it, and indeed they did not all hold the same opinions on the subject.

It is difficult to conceive of a human being in a more degraded condition than that of a Bushman. In some respects, however, he showed considerable ability, and there was certainly an enormous gulf between him and the highest of the brute creation. He possessed extraordinary powers of mimicry. Enclosed in a framework covered with the skin of an ostrich, he was in the habit of stalking game, and, by carefully keeping his prey to windward, was able to approach within shooting distance, when the poison of his arrow completed the task. He could imitate the peculiarities of individuals of other races with whom he came in contact, and was fond of creating mirth by exhibiting them in the drollest manner.

He was also an artist. On the walls of caves and the sheltered sides of great rocks he drew rude pictures in

profile of the animals with which he was acquainted. The tints were made with different kinds of ochre having considerable capability of withstanding the decay of time, and they were mixed with grease, so that they penetrated the rock more or less deeply according to its porousness. There are caves on the margins of rivers containing paintings which have been exposed to the action of water during occasional floods for at least a hundred years, and the colours are yet unfaded where the rock has not crumbled away.

In point of artistic merit, however, the paintings were seldom superior to the drawings on slates of European children eight or nine years of age, though there were occasional instances of game being delineated not only in a fairly correct but in a graceful manner, showing that some of the workmen possessed more skill than others. In none of them was any knowledge of perspective or of shading displayed. Two colours were sometimes used, as, for instance, the head or legs of an animal might be white, and the remainder of the body brown, but each colour was evenly laid on as far as it went. In short, the paintings might have been mistaken for the work of children, but for the impressions of the hands often accompanying them, and the scenes being chiefly those of the chase.

In some places, where the face of the rock was very dark, the Bushman drew an outline of a figure, and then chipped away the surface within it. The labour required for such a task, without metallic implements, must have been great, and the workman was undoubtedly possessed of much patience. He was a sculptor in the elementary stage of the art.

These wild people possessed too a faculty—it might almost be termed an additional sense—of which Europeans are destitute. They could make their way in a straight line to any place where they had been before. Even a child of nine or ten years of age, removed from its parents to a distance of over a hundred miles and without opportunity of observing the features of the country traversed, could months later return unerringly. They could give no explanation of the means by which they accomplished a task seemingly so difficult. Many of the inferior animals, however, have this faculty, as notably the dove, so that it is not surprising to find the lowest type of man in possession of it.

The life led by these savages was in truth a wretched one, judged from a European standard. They had no contact with people beyond their own little communities, except in war, for they were without a conception of commerce. If a pestilence had swept them all from the face of the earth, nothing more would have been left to mark where they had once been than the drilled stones, rudely shaped arrowheads, rock paintings, and crude sculptures. Their pleasures were hardly superior to those of dumb animals. They had a musical instrument like a bow, with a piece of quill attached to the string, but the sounds produced from it could hardly be termed harmonious. Their dancing was a mere quivering of the body and stamping of the feet. The games that they practised were chiefly—if not entirely—imitation hunts, in which some or all of them represented animals. In this pastime they displayed much cleverness, whether they acted as men or as lions in pursuit of antelopes. But it was not often

that they engaged in play, for the effort to sustain existence was with them severe and almost constant.

At early dawn the Bushman rose from his mat or bed of grass in a cavern on the side of a hill, and scanned the valley or plain below in search of game. If any living thing was within range of his far-seeing eye, he grasped his bow and quiver of arrows, and with his dog set off in pursuit. His wife—he had but one, for he was a strict monogamist—and his children followed, carrying fire and collecting bulbs and anything else that was edible on the way. At nightfall, if they were fortunate, they collected about the body of an antelope, and there they remained till nothing that could be consumed was left. And so from day to day and year to year life passed on, without anything of an intellectual nature to ennoble it.

It can now be asserted in positive language that these people were incapable of adopting European civilisation. During the first half of the present century agents of various missionary societies made strenuous efforts for their improvement, many persons who were not missionaries tried during long years to induce them to abandon their savage habits, and there were even experiments in providing parties of them with domestic cattle, in order to encourage a pastoral life, but all were without success. To this day there has not been a single instance of a Bushman of pure blood having permanently adopted the habits of a white man. They could not even exist in presence of a high civilisation, but dwindled away rapidly, and have now nearly died out altogether. It would seem that for them progress was possible in no other way than

by exceedingly slow development and mixture of blood in successive stages with races always a little more advanced.

THE HOTTENTOTS, TERMED BY THE BANTU AMALAWU.

The Hottentots termed themselves Khoikhoi, men of men, as they prided themselves upon their superiority over the other race with which they were best acquainted, and in fact they were considerably more advanced towards civilisation than the Bushmen; though a stranger at first sight might not have seen much difference in personal appearance between the two. A little observation, however, would have shown that the Bushmen were not only much smaller and uglier, but that their faces were broader, their eyes not nearly as full and bright, their lobeless ears rounder in shape, and their chins much less prominent. Their wild expression also was not observed in the Hottentot face.

The investigations of the late Dr Bleek have shown that the languages of these two classes of people were not only different in the words, but that they varied in construction. That spoken by the Hottentots was free of deep guttural sounds, and though it was accompanied by much clapping of the tongue, the clicks were not so numerous as in Bushman speech. Some words were composites, but most were monosyllables, as were all the roots. The liquid consonant *l* was wanting. There were many dialects, but these did not vary more than the forms of English spoken in different counties. It was inflected by means of affixes only, which placed it

in contrast with the Bantu language, as this was inflected chiefly by prefixes. It had three numbers, singular, dual, and plural. Its system of notation was decimal, and was perfect at least up to a hundred.

No difficulty has been experienced by European missionaries during the present century in reducing this language to writing, and some religious literature has been printed in it. Words to express ideas unknown before were formed from well-known roots according to its grammatical structure, and were at once understood by every one. This is sufficient to show that it was of a high order. It is now, however, rapidly dying out, as the descendants of the people who once used it have long since learned to converse in Dutch, and by force of circumstances nearly all have forgotten their ancestral speech.

The Hottentots were divided into a number of tribes, each of which was usually composed of several clans loosely joined together. The tribes were frequently at war with each other. Every clan had its own chief, whose authority, however, was very limited, as his subjects were impatient of control. The succession was from father to son, and in the absence of a son to brother or nephew. The several heads of clans recognised the supremacy in rank of one of their number, who was accounted the paramount chief of the tribe, but unless he happened to be a man of more force of character than the others, he exercised no real power over them. The petty rulers were commonly jealous of each other, so that they could only unite in cases of extreme danger to all. The government was thus particularly frail, and a very slight shock was sufficient

to break any combination of the people into fragments.

The principal property of the Hottentots consisted of horned cattle and sheep. They had great skill in training oxen to obey certain calls, as well as to carry burdens, and bulls were taught not only to assist in guarding the herds from robbers and beasts of prey, but to aid in war by charging the enemy on the field of battle. The milk of their cows was the chief article of their diet. They did not kill horned cattle for food, except on occasions of feasting, but they ate all that died a natural death. The ox of the Hottentot was an inferior animal to that of Europe. He was a gaunt, bony creature, with immense horns and long legs, but he was hardy and well adapted to supply the wants of his owner. He served instead of a horse for riding purposes, being guided by a riem or thong of raw hide attached to a piece of wood passed through the cartilage of his nose. The sheep were covered with hair instead of wool, were of various colours, and had long lapping ears and tails six or seven pounds in weight. The milk as well as the flesh was used for food. Children were taught to suck the ewes, and often derived their whole sustenance from this source. The only other domestic animal was the dog. He was an ugly creature, his body being shaped like that of a jackal, and the hair on his spine being turned in the wrong direction; but he was a faithful, serviceable animal of his kind.

In addition to milk and the meat of oxen and sheep, of which they rejected no part except the gall, the food of the Hottentots consisted of the flesh of game obtained in the chase, locusts, and various kinds of

wild plants and fruits. Agriculture, even in its simplest forms, was not practised by them. They knew how to make an intoxicating drink of honey, of which large quantities were to be had in the season of flowers, and this they used to excess while it lasted. Another powerful intoxicant with which they were acquainted was dacha, a species of wild hemp, and whenever this was procurable they smoked it with a pipe made of the horn of an antelope. That its effects were pernicious was admitted by themselves, still they could not refrain from making use of it.

Their women were better clothed than those of the Bushmen, but the men were usually satisfied with very little covering, and had no sense of shame in appearing altogether naked. The dress of both sexes was made of skins, commonly prepared with the hair on. When removed from the animal, the skin was cleansed of any fleshy matter adhering to it, was then stretched and dried, and was afterwards rubbed with grease till it became soft and pliable. The ordinary costume of a man was merely a piece of jackal skin suspended in front, and a little slip of prepared hide behind. In cold weather he wrapped himself in a kaross or mantle of furs sewed together with sinews. The women wore at all times a headdress of fur, an apron, and a wrapper or a girdle of leather strings suspended from the waist. In cold weather, or when carrying infants on their backs, they added a scanty kaross. Children wore no clothing whatever. Round their legs the females sewed strips of raw hide, like rings, which, when dry, rattled against each other and made a noise when they moved.

Both sexes ornamented their heads with copper trinkets, and hung round their necks strings of shells, leopards' teeth, or any other glittering objects they could obtain. Ivory armlets were worn by the men. From earliest infancy their bodies were smeared with grease and rubbed over with clay, soot, or powdered buchu, and to this partly may be attributed the stench of their persons. The coat of grease and clay was not intended for ornament alone. It protected them from the weather and from the vermin that infested their huts and clothing.

Their dwellings were oval or circular frames of light undressed wood, sometimes covered with skins, but usually with mats made of rushes. They were not more than five feet in height, and had but one small opening through which the inmates crawled. In cold weather a fire was made in a cavity in the centre. The huts of a kraal were arranged in the form of a circle, the space enclosed being used as a fold for cattle. They could be taken to pieces, placed on pack-oxen, removed to a distance, and set up again, with very little labour and no waste.

The weapons used by the Hottentots in war and the chase were bows and arrows, sticks with clubbed heads, and assagais. They usually covered the head of the arrow with poison, so that a wound from one, however slight, was mortal.

The assagai could be hurled with precision to a distance of thirty yards. The knobkerie, or clubbed stick, was almost as formidable a weapon. It was rather stouter than an ordinary walking cane, and had a round head two or three inches in diameter. Boys were

trained to throw this with so accurate an aim as to hit a bird on the wing at twenty or thirty yards distance. It was projected in such a manner as to bring the heavy knob into contact with the object aimed at, and antelopes as large as goats were killed with it. The bow was a weapon of little force, and the arrows would have been harmless to large game if they had not been poisoned.

The Hottentots were acquainted with the art of smelting iron, but were too indolent to turn their knowledge to much account. Only a few assagai and arrow-heads were made of that metal. Horn and bone were ready at hand, were easily worked, and were commonly used to point weapons. Stone was also employed by some of the tribes for this purpose, but not to any great extent, though the weights for digging sticks were the same with them as with the Bushmen. Masses of almost solid copper were obtained in Namaqualand, and this metal was spread over the neighbouring country by means of barter and war, but was never used for any other purpose than that of making ornaments for the person.

It is thus noticeable that in South Africa there were no intermediate stages between the use of unpolished stone implements and implements of iron, as there were in Europe, where polished stone and bronze intervened. Whether the Hottentots acquired from another race a knowledge of the manner of smelting iron, or whether they made the discovery themselves, is doubtful. The same difficulty arises here as with their possession of oxen and sheep. If, as has been supposed by some writers—notably by Dr Bleek on the ground

of affinity of language,—one branch of their ancestors was of North African origin, they could have obtained their domestic cattle and have learned how to smelt iron from the Bantu tribes through whose territories they passed; but as they occupied no other part of South Africa than the margin of a lengthy coast and the interior banks of a single river, if this theory is correct they must have moved downward close to the sea, and then, instead of expanding inland as they increased in number, they must gradually have taken possession of the shore for a distance of over fifteen hundred miles. This is certainly possible, but as they cared so little for the sea that they never made even a rough canoe, it does not seem very probable.

These people manufactured earthenware pots for cooking purposes, which, though in general clumsily shaped and coarse in appearance, were capable of withstanding intense heat. Milk was kept in skin bags or in large bowls made by hollowing out blocks of wood. Ostrich egg shells and ox horns were used for carrying water and other domestic purposes.

Some small and weak clans of Hottentots who had lost their cattle in war or by disease lived along the shore, and depended for existence upon the produce of the sea. They had neither boats nor hooks, but they managed to catch fish by throwing spears from rocks standing out in deep water and by making stone walls across gullies in order to enclose considerable spaces which were nearly dry at low tide. Shell-fish also formed a portion of their food, and occasionally a dead whale would drift ashore and furnish them with a feast. Shell and ash heaps made by these people are found in

many places along the coast from Cape Cross to the Kei river. They contain ordinary implements, in rare instances human skeletons, and generally bones of animals obtained in the chase, always broken in order that the marrow might be extracted. In this respect they resemble the kitchen middens of Europe, but nothing indicative of great antiquity has yet been found in any of them. On the contrary, they all appear to be quite modern, that is their age seems to be only of hundreds, not of thousands of years.

Hottentots were found living in the manner here indicated when Europeans first came to the country, and on the coast of Namaqualand there were some existing in a similar state after the middle of the present century. As far as food, clothing, and lodging were concerned, they were in no better condition than Bushmen, but there was always the hope before them of acquiring cattle by a successful raid, in which case they would at once revert to the ordinary mode of living of their race.

All the shell-heaps found on the South African coast, however, were not made by impoverished Hottentots. A few—possibly a good many—were made by Bushmen, as is proved by the paintings on rocks overhanging the deposits. There must also have been mixed breeds along the coast in olden times, as there are to-day in the territory about the lower Vaal river, and some of the remains may be due to them. These mixed breeds arose from the union of Hottentot men with captured Bushwomen, for though the races were constantly at war, young females were generally spared by the less savage of the two.

The Hottentots were a superstitious people, who placed great faith in the efficacy of charms to ward off evil. They believed that certain occurrences foreboded good or ill luck, that a mantis alighting on a hut brought prosperity with it, and many other absurdities of a like nature. They lived in dread of ghosts and evil spirits. They invoked blessings from the moon, to whose praise they sang and danced when it appeared as new. They also invoked blessings from dead ancestors, to whose shades sacrifices were offered by priests on important occasions, and they implored protection and favour from a mythical hero named Heitsi-eibib, whose worship consisted in throwing a bit of wood or an additional stone upon a cairn. Cairns of considerable size raised in this manner are to be found at the present day within territory occupied by Bantu tribes, showing, like many other indications, that the Hottentots once occupied a larger area than when Europeans became acquainted with them. They made offerings also to a powerful evil spirit, with a view of averting his wrath. Their system of religion could not be explained by themselves, what they understood being little more than that the customs connected with it had come down to them from their ancestors. They had not the faintest expectation of their own resurrection or conception of a heaven and a hell.

A more improvident, unstable, thoughtless people never existed. Those among them who had cattle were without care or grief, and usually spent the greater part of the day in sleeping. They delighted, however, in dancing to music, which they produced from reeds. Active in this exercise and in hunting, in all other

respects they were extremely indolent. Their filthiness of person, clothing, and habitation was disgusting. They enjoyed eating food that would have turned the stomach of the least delicate of Europeans, for the sense of smelling with them—as with all people of a low type—was extremely dull.

They were in the habit of abandoning aged and helpless persons as well as sickly and deformed children, whom they allowed to perish of hunger. But they regarded this as mercy, not as cruelty. Better that a helpless wretch or a cripple should give up life at once than linger on in misery. For the same reason, when a woman giving suck died, the child was buried with its parent.

The Hottentots were polygamous in the sense that their customs admitted of a wealthy man having more wives than one, but the practice was by no means general. There were many kraals in which there was not a single case of polygamy. It was customary with some, perhaps with all, to take wives not from their own but from another clan. The marriage customs required that cattle should be given by the bridegroom to the nearest relatives of the bride, but temporary unions were common, and indeed a system almost as bad as that of free love prevailed, for chastity on both sides was very lightly regarded.

The women were more nearly the equals of the men, and were permitted to exercise much greater freedom of speech in domestic disputes, than among most savages. They were mistresses within the huts. The stores of milk were under their control, not under that of their husbands, as was the case with the Bantu tribes. The

men tended the cattle, but their daughters milked the cows.

Among some—not all—of the Hottentot clans there was a custom which, though described by many early observers, has within the present century without sufficient investigation been regarded by most writers as so utterly incredible that they have not noticed it. Yet it is practised at the present day by people who are certainly not of Hottentot blood, but who must have derived their language as well as many of their customs from Hottentot conquerors in times long gone by. It stands to them in the same relation that circumcision does to many Bantu clans, that is among them a youth cannot enter the society of men or take to himself a wife until he has become a *monorch* (μόνορχις). A custom so extraordinary shows what force habit and superstition have among savages.

With all their degrading habits, the Hottentots possessed large powers of imagination. They speculated upon objects in nature in a way that no Bantu ever did, and their ideas on these subjects, though seemingly absurd, at least bore evidence of a disposition to think. They were excellent story-tellers. Seated round fires of an evening, they told tales of the doings of men and of animals—usually the baboon or the jackal—which produced boundless mirth. These stories generally contained coarse and obscene expressions, or what Europeans would regard as such, but their sense of delicacy in these matters was naturally low.

The evening with them, as probably with all barbarians, was the time for enjoyment. What could be more cheerful than the dance in the bright moon-

light or listening to a merry tale by a fire under a starry sky? Then the young men tried their strength in wrestling matches, or in lifting one another from the ground, while the young women looked on and applauded the successful competitors. Then, too, they played games which, though apparently suited to the capacities of little children only, afforded them much amusement. The commonest of these games was adopted by the Bantu on the eastern border when they conquered the Hottentots there, and is performed by adults among them to-day, though the people with whom it originated have long since forgotten it.

It was played by two persons or any number exceeding two. The players sat on the ground, and each had a pebble so small that it could easily be concealed in a folded hand. If there were many players they formed themselves into sides or parties, but when they were few in number one played against the rest. This one concealed the pebble in either of his hands, and then threw both arms out against his opponent, at the same time calling that he met or that he evaded. His opponent threw his arms out in the same manner, so that his right hand was opposite the first player's left, and his left opposite the first player's right. The clenched hands were then opened, and if the pebbles were found to meet, the first player won if he had called out that he met, or lost if he had called out that he evaded. When there were many players, one after another was beaten until only two were left. These two then played against each other, when the one who was beaten was laughed at and the winner was applauded. In playing, the arms were thrown out

very quickly, and the words were rapidly uttered, so that a stranger to the game might have fancied there was neither order nor rule observed. Young men and boys often spent whole nights in this childish amusement, which had the same hold upon them as dice upon some Europeans.

Probably, if intellectual enjoyment be excluded, the Hottentots were among the happiest people in existence. They generally lived until old age without serious illness. They did not allow possible future troubles to disturb them, and a sufficiency of food was all that was needed to make them as merry and light-hearted as children at play.

They were capable of adopting the habits of Europeans, though the process required to be so gradual that the training of two centuries and a half has been very far from sufficient to complete it. They have learned to cultivate the ground, to use the same food as white people, to wear European clothing, and to act as rough handicraftsmen, but there is no instance of one of them having ever attained a position that required either much intellectual power or much mechanical skill. Since they came in contact with Europeans and African slaves, however, their blood has been so mixed that very few pure Hottentots are in existence now, and every successive generation sees the number become smaller.

CHAPTER II.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BANTU TRIBES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Chapter II.—*Contents.*

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CHAPTER II.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BANTU TRIBES OF SOUTH AFRICA.

THE third variety of human beings found by white men at the close of the fifteenth century in occupation of a great part of South Africa is now usually termed the Bantu, in accordance with a proposal of the late Dr Bleek. These people had no word except tribal names to distinguish themselves from other races, *ntu*[1] in their language meaning a human being or person of any colour or country; but ethnologists felt the want of a specific designation for them, and adopted this as a convenient one. In the division of mankind thus named are included all those Africans who use a language which is inflected principally by means of prefixes, and which in the construction of sentences follows certain rules depending upon harmony of sound.[2]

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[1] In the dialect of the Tembu, Pondo, Zulu, and other coast tribes: *um-ntu* a person, plural *aba-ntu* people; diminutive *um-ntwana* a child, plural *aba-ntwana* children; abstract derivative *ubu-ntu* the qualities of human beings, diminutive *ubu-ntwana* the qualities of children. In the Herero dialect: *omu-ndu* a person, plural *ova-ndu* people. In the dialect of the Basuto: *mo-tho* a person, plural *ba-tho* persons. The pronunciation, however, is nearly the same, the *h* in *batho* being sounded only as an aspirate, and the *o* as *oo*, *baat-hoo*.

[2] This definition is of course only a general one, and must be subject to exceptions, because races cannot be grouped by means of

Tribes occupying for many generations the greater portion of a country of such extent as Africa south of the Zambesi, and not having much intercourse with each other, naturally developed differences, and there were circumstances connected with the Bantu which increased the tendency towards variation. First there was the *hlonipa* custom, by which women were obliged constantly to invent new words, so that each dialect underwent gradual dissimilar changes. Next, and more important still, was an influx of Asiatics at some remote time, who mixed their blood with that of the people on the eastern side of the country, and brought about great improvements in their mental condition.

In a general description, such as this, it will be sufficient to classify the tribes in three groups, though it should be remembered that there are many trifling differences between the various branches of each of these. In the first group can be placed the tribes along the eastern coast south of the Sabi river, and those which in recent times have made their way from that part of the country into the highlands of the interior. The best known of these are the Amaxosa, the Abatembu, the Amampondo, the Amabaca, the Abambo (now broken into numerous fragments), the Amazulu, the Amaswazi, the Amatonga, the Magwamba, the Ma-

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language alone. Thus the people called Berg Damaras, who live in the tract of country along the western coast north of Walfish Bay, are certainly Bantu by blood, though they speak a Hottentot dialect, and resemble Bushmen in their habits. They must have been subdued in remote times, and forced to adopt the language of their conquerors. This may also have been the case with tribes in other parts of the continent.

tshangana, and the Matabele. This group can be termed the coast tribes, though some members of it are now far from the sea.

The second group can include the tribes that a century ago occupied the great interior plain and came down to the ocean between the Zambesi and Sabi rivers. It will include the Batlapin, the Batlaro, the Barolong, the Bahurutsi, the Bangwaketsi, the Bakwena, the Bamangwato, all the sections of the Makalanga, and the whole of the Basuto, north and south. This group can be termed the interior tribes.

The third will comprise all the Bantu living between the Kalahari and the Atlantic ocean, such as the Ovaherero, the Ovampo, and others. These have no mixture of Asiatic blood. They are blacker in colour, coarser in appearance, and duller in intellect than the others, if an average is taken. The dialects spoken by them are also more primitive. This group can be dismissed with a very few words, because it has only recently come into contact with Europeans, and has taken no part in South African history. The feuds between its different members, if they could be accurately traced, would be of no interest, and no lessons could be drawn from them. It will be sufficient therefore to say of these western tribes that their language, laws, mode of living, and customs generally were similar to those of their kindred of the interior and the eastern coast, but were in many respects lower in order.

The individuals who composed the first and second named groups varied in colour from deep bronze to black. Some had features of the lowest negro type:

thick projecting lips, broad flat noses, and narrow foreheads; while others had prominent and in rare instances even aquiline noses, well developed foreheads, and lips but little thicker than those of Europeans. Among the eastern tribes these extremes could sometimes be noticed in the same family, but the great majority of the people were of a type higher than a mean between the two. They were of mixed blood, and the branches of the ancestral stock differed considerably, as one was African and the other Asiatic.

Those who occupied the land along the south-eastern coast were in general large without being corpulent, strong, muscular, erect in bearing, and with all their limbs in perfect symmetry. Many of them were haughty in demeanour, and possessed a large amount of vanity. The men were usually handsomer than the women, owing to the girls being often stunted in growth and hardened in limb by carrying burdens on their heads and toiling in gardens at an early age.

Though at times they presented the appearance of a peaceable, good-natured, indolent people, they were subject to outbursts of great excitement, when the most savage passions had free play. The man who spent a great part of his life gossiping in idleness, not knowing what it was to toil for bread, was hardly recognisable when, plumed and adorned with military trappings, he had worked himself into frenzy with the war dance. The period of excitement was, however, short. In the same way their outbursts of grief were violent, but were soon succeeded by cheerfulness.

They were subject to few diseases, and were capable

of undergoing without harm privations and sufferings which the hardiest Europeans would have sunk under. Occasionally there were seasons of famine caused by prolonged drought, when whole tribes were reduced to eat wild roots, bulbs, mimosa gum, and whatever else unaided nature provided. At such times they became emaciated, but as long as they could procure even the most wretched food they did not actually die, as white people would have done under similar circumstances. Nor did pestilence follow want of sustenance to the same extent as with us.

They were probably the most prolific people on the face of the earth. All the females were married at an early age, very few women were childless, and in most of the tribes provision was even made by custom for widows to add to the families of their deceased husbands.

The language spoken by the Bantu was of a high order, subject to strict grammatical rules, and adequate for the expression of any ideas whatever. Its construction, however, was very different from that of the languages of Europe. It was broken up into many dialects, so that individuals from the western coast, from the interior, and from the eastern coast could not understand each other, though the great majority of the words used by all were formed from the same roots. In the south-eastern dialects the English sound of the letter *r* was wanting, while in some of the others the sound of our *l* was never heard. In all there were combinations of consonants which it was very difficult for strangers of mature years to master.

There were clicks in only a few dialects of the

language spoken by the Bantu family. These were derived in the south from Hottentot, and elsewhere probably from Bushman sources. They were introduced by females who were spared when the hordes to which they belonged were conquered, as is evident not only from tradition, but from the words in which they occur being chiefly those pertaining to the occupations of women. There is this peculiarity in the language, that some of the dialects on the opposite sides of the continent bear a closer resemblance to each other than to those between them. The tribes seem to have been scattered and mixed together again by violent convulsions in some long-forgotten time.

The Bantu tribes were composed of a number of clans, each under its own chief, but all acknowledging the supreme authority of one particular individual. Sometimes the heads of the clans were the minor members of the family of the paramount chief, in which case the tribe was a compact body, every individual in it having a common interest with every other; but it often happened that clans broken in war were adopted as vassals by a powerful ruler, and in these cases the cohesion of the different sections was much less firm.

Most of those living along the south-eastern coast derived their titles from the name of their first great chief or founder, thus the Amahlubi were the people of Hlubi, the Abatembu the people of Tembu. A few were called after some peculiarity of the people, but in such cases the titles were originally nicknames given by strangers and afterwards adopted by the

tribe itself. Both of these forms were found among the people of the interior, but with them a more common custom was to use the plural of the name of the animal which the tribe held in fear or reverence. Thus the Bakwena were the people of the crocodile, the Bataung the people of the lion, the Baphuti the people of the little blue antelope. Each tribe of the interior had its own *siboko*, or object of veneration, which it "danced to," but did not actually worship. The members of the tribe would on no account harm the animal thus venerated, and took great trouble to avoid even coming in contact with it, though they had no respect for the animals held in regard by others. The people who lived along the south-eastern coast had no *siboko*.

In times of peace the government of the supreme chief was in ordinary matters hardly felt beyond his own kraal. Each clan possessed all the machinery of administration, and in general it was only in cases of appeal or serious quarrels that the tribal head used his authority. In war he issued commands to all, and on important occasions he summoned the minor chiefs to aid him with advice. The members of the ruling family, even to the most distant branches, were of aristocratic rank, and enjoyed many privileges. Their persons were inviolable, and an indignity offered to one of them was considered a crime of the gravest nature. Even the customs of the people were set aside in favour of the chiefs of highest rank. A common man of the coast tribes, for instance, could not marry a blood relative, no matter how distant, but a great chief could, though connections nearer than

fourth or fifth cousins were very rare. Such a marriage by a commoner would have been regarded with horror, but was overlooked in the chief's case, in order to obtain a woman of suitable birth to be the mother of the heir in the great line.

With regard to the common people, the theory of the law was that they were the property of the rulers, consequently an offence against any of their persons was atoned for by a fine to the chief. Murder and assaults were punished in this manner. Thus in theory the government was despotic, but in practice it had many checks. The first was the existence of a body of councillors about the person of each chief, whose advice he was compelled to listen to. A second was a custom that fugitives were to be protected by strangers with whom they took refuge, so that an arbitrary or unpopular ruler was in constant danger of losing his followers.

The law of succession to the government favoured the formation of new tribes. The first wives of a chief were usually the daughters of some of his father's principal retainers ; but as he grew older and increased in power his alliance was courted by great families, and thus it generally happened that his consort of highest rank was taken when he was of advanced age. Usually she was the daughter of a neighbouring ruler, and was selected for him by the great council of the tribe, who provided the cattle required by her relatives. She was termed the great wife, and her eldest son was the principal heir. Another of his wives was invested at an earlier period of his life, by the advice of his councillors and friends, with the title of wife of the right hand, and to her eldest son some of his father's retainers

were given, with whom he formed a new clan. The government of this was entrusted to him as soon as he was full grown, so that while his brother was still a child he had opportunities of increasing his power. If he was the abler ruler of the two, a quarrel between them arose almost to a certainty as soon as the great heir reached manhood and was also invested with a separate command. If peace was maintained, upon the death of his father the son of the right hand acknowledged his brother as superior in rank, but neither paid him tribute nor admitted his right to interfere in the internal government of the new clan.

In some of the tribes three sons of every chief divided their father's adherents among them. In the latter case the third heir was termed the representative of the ancients or the son of the left hand. This dis-

integrating process was to some extent checked by frequent feuds and wars, but whenever there was comparative peace it was in active operation.

The Bantu had a system of common law and perfectly organised tribunals of justice. Their laws came down from a time to which even tradition did not reach, and those which related to ordinary matters were so well known to every member of the community that trials were mere investigations into statements and proofs of occurrences. When complicated cases arose, precedents were sought for, antiquaries were referred to, and celebrated jurists even in other tribes were consulted. If all these means of ascertaining the law failed, and the chief before whom the case was being tried was not a man of generally recognised ability, it often happened that no judgment was given, for fear of