

THE SOUTH AFRICANS

THE THREE NATIVE RACES THAT INHABIT THE COUNTRY.

The Bushmen, the Hottentots and the Bantus or Kaffirs—These Last Are Much Above the Level of the Others Physically and in All Respects.

When the Dutch fixed their first post at Cape Town in 1652, with no thought either of colonization or of conquest, but for the sake of having gardens which could supply fresh vegetables to the scurvy stricken crews of their ships sailing to the east, they found three native races inhabiting the country. One of these, the Bushmen, though few in numbers, were widely scattered over the whole of South Africa. They were nomads of almost the lowest kind, with a marvellous faculty for tracking and trapping wild animals, but neither owning cattle nor tilling the soil, with scarcely even a tribal organization, no religion and a language consisting of a succession of clicks. Unable to accustom themselves to civilized life, driven out of some districts by the settlers and in others no longer able to find support owing to the extinction of game, they are now almost extinct, though a few are still left in the deserts of the Kalahari and northern Bechuanaland. Before many years the only trace of their existence will be in the remarkable drawings of animals with which they delighted to cover the smooth surfaces of rocks. These drawings, which are found all the way from Zambezi to the Cape and from Maniandland to the Atlantic, are executed in red and yellow pigments and are often full of spirit and character.

The second race was that which the Dutch called Hottentot. They were of a reddish or yellowish black hue, taller than the Bushmen, but with squat and seldom muscular figures—a thoughtless, cheerful, easy going people, who roved hither and thither with their flocks and herds as they could find pasture. They were decidedly superior to the Bushmen, whom they hated, but quite unable to withstand Europeans, and their numbers rapidly declined, partly from the loss of their best grazing grounds, but largely also through epidemic diseases, and especially smallpox, which ships, touching on their way from India, brought into the country. They are now, as a distinct race, almost extinct in the Colony, though a good deal of their blood has passed into the mixed black population of Cape Town and its neighborhood—a population the other elements of which are Malays and west coast negroes, the descendants of slaves imported in the last century. Farther north, on the south side of the Orange river, and beyond it in Namagaland, small tribes cognate to the Hottentots still wander over the dreary plains.

Very different from these weak Bushmen and Hottentots was and is the third native race, those who are called Bantu (a word meaning "people") by themselves and Kaffirs by Europeans. The word Kaffir is Arabic, and means an infidel (literally "one who denies"). It is applied by Mussulmans not merely to these South Africans, but to other heathen, as, for instance, by the Afghans to the idolaters of Kafiristan in the Hindoo-Kush mountains. The Portuguese probably took the name from the Arabs, whom they found already settled on the east coast. These Bantu tribes—if we may class those as Bantus who speak languages of what is called the Bantu type—fill all east Africa from the regions of the upper Nile southward.

Those who dwell south of the Zambezi are generally strong and well made men, sometimes as black as a gulf of Guinea negro, sometimes verging on a brown tint; and though they have the woolly hair and thick lips generally characteristic of the negro, individuals are often found among them whose cast of features suggests an admixture of Semitic blood. They are more prolific than the Hottentots, as well as physically stronger and better made, and they were further advanced in the arts of life. Some of the tribes dug out and worked iron and copper; all of them used iron. Their chief wealth lay in their cattle; horses they did not possess, but where the land was fit for tillage they cultivated it. They had no religion, except in a sort of magic, and that worship of the ghosts of ancestors which seems to be the most widely diffused of all human superstitions. Instead of a priesthood, there were wizards or medicine men, often powerful as the demagogues of those whom the chief wished to put to death. Intellectually they were very much upon the level of the native races of West Africa.—James Bryce, M. P., in Century.

"Auld Robin Gray."

A ballad that won instant fame against the expectation and even the wish of its author was "Auld Robin Gray," written by Lady Anne Lindsay about the end of the last century merely for her own satisfaction to replace the coarse verses of an old melody that pleased her. She sang charmingly, and the new ballad soon came into favor. Great was the curiosity aroused as to the author of this pathetic song in whose simple verses all the elements of a heartrending tragedy are contained, but Lady Anne, modest and retiring by nature, preserved silence for many years, smiling no doubt at the controversy that raged so hotly. In the course of it her ballad was attributed by some dispartants to David Rizzio, declared by others to be a genuine sixteenth century production and finally made the subject of a 20 guinea prize to be bestowed on anybody acute enough to bring to light the veritable author.—Cornhill Magazine.

Handy For Hail.

The Boston Journal man wants to know why the horseless carriages on exhibition in that city are all provided with whip sockets. Guess The Journal man never lived in a prohibition state.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

WAYS OF THE CUCKOOS.

Conclusions Derived From a Long Series of Observations In England.

The London Field tells of the eggs of the cuckoo and of the foster parents as exhibited in a collection comprising 919 cuckoo eggs and accompanying clutches, or sets, of the foster parents. These egg sets were owned by E. Bidwell, Walter Rothschild, P. Crowley and a man not a member of the British Ornithologists' club, H. Massey, who had more than any other—275 cuckoo eggs and 50 fosterers'. The conclusions which have been arrived at in regard to the habits of this feathered tough are put down in one, two, three order, according to observations recorded. These conclusions give a curious and interesting insight into the ways of a bird, the like of which, inasmuch as the habits are concerned, is found in the American cow bird.

The eggs of the European cuckoo vary more in size and color (markings) than the eggs of any other bird. These eggs are remarkable in their form, the weight of the shells and the thickness and hardness of the shells. The eggs laid in the nests of two kinds of birds (Ruticilla phoeniceus and Fringilla montifringilla) are nearly always like the eggs of the foster parents. Furthermore, imitations are also common in nests of four other varieties, but are never found in several species. It seems from this that the cuckoo has the power of laying eggs of a certain color or size resembling those of the duped foster parents, in at least some instances. Most cuckoos lay their eggs in nests of some particular species of bird, the red breasted or rood warbler, for instance. Cuckoos change to other varieties of nests only when they cannot find the accustomed ones, and they come to one district year after year.

The female bird lays about 20 eggs in a year, which is more than the respectable female birds of ordinary species. This is because of the precarious existence of the eggs, which are liable to be thrown to the ground by the birds in whose nest they are placed. One egg only is placed in one nest by the mother bird, which usually, though not always, throws out one of the original eggs. One hundred and nineteen varieties of birds have been imposed upon by the cuckoo, and while most of these birds were small ones, warblers, flycatchers and the like, turtle, stock and ring-doves, little grebes, magpies, jackdoves, and even the shrikes (four kinds), have given support to this race of beggars.

Christians.

The chief street of Christiania is the broad Karl Johans Gade, which leads up from the eastern station to the palace. Here on opposite sides are two buildings of importance, where young men flock to study and old men meet to legislate. The proximity of politics and learning recalls the conception of Stein, who hoped that the presence of a great university in Berlin would have a good effect on the government. The chief Prussian and Norwegian temples of the thoughtful goddess were founded within a few years of each other. Both have displayed a readiness to welcome new ideas and furthered the cause of freedom in countless fields of thought.

The life and movement of the city are practically confined to this street and the harbor. There the dramatist Ibsen is in the habit of walking every day, and his countrymen are said to regulate their watches by his appearance. It was my fortune to lunch in a restaurant at a table not far from where he sat, but his face did not specially attract me. Those who feel more sympathy with his works and relish his portraits of exceptions would be fascinated by his grim and crabbed features, unrelieved by any frank or genial smile, for of such are the world's reformers.

Inclosed in a shed on the grassy ground behind the university buildings are two viking ships, which date from the middle ages. No relics of the past are more essentially poetic than those which mark the earliest triumphs of man in his awful struggle with things. According to all accounts, the lot of Norwegian fishermen and peasants is still peculiarly hard, for nature is a cruel stepmother, and life becomes almost tragic for them by excess of work.—Westminster Review.

Madras Thunderstorms.

As the result of his prolonged study of those striking phenomena, the thunderstorms of Madras, Professor Smith informs the Scottish Meteorological society that the first remarkable fact observed by him was that of certain seasons of the year when sheet lightning appeared almost every night, always in a west or southwesterly direction and invariably near the horizon; it may be, therefore, he remarks, that these discharges occur in the region where the moist and dustless sea wind meets the dry and dusty land wind, one being, perhaps, positively electrified and the other negatively. In these lightning displays as many as 300 flashes per minute have been counted, this rate being kept up for an hour or an hour and a half. Another notable peculiarity remarked of this region is that the heaviest rains are unaccompanied by thunder, while the displays of lightning are not accompanied by any rain.

Delaware's Names.

Delaware has been called the Diamond State, for, though small in size, it formerly was of great political importance. It also enjoys the nickname of the Blue Hen State, this having been bestowed on account of a gentleman named Caldwell, who made the state famous in sporting annals by the quality of his gamecocks, which he always bred from the eggs of a blue hen, believing that this was the best color for the mother of a gamecock.

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