CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Report of Dr. Bleek concerning his Researches into the Bushman Language and Customs, presented to the Honourable the House of Assembly by command of His Excellency the Governor.

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MAY, 1873.

Mowbray, 15th April, 1873.

The Honourable the Secretary for Native Affairs.

Sir,—I have the honour herewith to lay before you, for the information of His Excellency the Governor and the Legislature, a report concerning the progress of the Bushman studies.

From this report it will be seen that special facilities have been afforded by the Colonial Government for an inquiry into the only kind of South African language as yet unexplored. And I have gladly given my time and strength for an object which appeared to me of sufficient importance to render me willing to delay on its account the prosecution of my main work, the Comparative Grammar of South African Languages.

The expenses which I had incurred in this inquiry, up to the end of the year 1871, were repaid to me last year by a Parliamentary Grant of £100. I had then estimated the expenditure to be incurred by me on this account, in 1872, at £100 more. But from the non-arrival of the wives of the Bushmen (whom I was then expecting), the expenditure for 1872 was about £35 less than I had calculated that it would be, namely, £64 18s. To this sum is to be added £16 for expenses already incurred during the present year, to the 31st of March, making in all about £80 18s. for expenses incurred by me from 1st January, 1872, to 31st March, 1873.

I respectfully solicit you to recommend that His Excellency the Governor may be pleased to allow this further sum to be refunded to me, or to make some provision for its repayment.

At the same time I beg to draw your attention to the existence, in the collection under my charge in the Library, of a number of manuscripts containing Native Literature in different South African languages.

The publication of these documents, most of which are accompanied by a translation, would throw much light upon the workings of the native mind in the different nations living in or near to the Colony. May I recommend this subject to the gracious consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and mention, in connection with it, that in the small Colony of Natal the sum of £200 per annum was granted for several years to the Rev. H. Callaway, M.D., towards the expenses of printing the Zulu native literature which had been collected by himself.

But your own well-known interest in, and knowledge of, the native races renders it quite unnecessary for me to say anything further to you regarding the importance of this subject.

I have, &c.,

W. H. I. BLEEK, Ph. D.

[A. 17—'73.]

Pippa 1988

REPORT CONCERNING BUSHMAN RESEARCHES, BY W. H. I. BLEEK, PH. D.

The oldest, and until late years, the only, materials for a knowledge of the Bushman Language, were the short vocabularies and few sentences published by the traveller, Dr. H. Lichtenstein. These were, probably, mainly obtained from those missionaries who at the beginning of this century were working among the Bushmen, some of them in connection with the London Missionary Society, and others sent out by a Dutch Society. In the original edition of Lichtenstein's book of Travels, these vocabularies stand by the side of his Koranna Hottentot vocabularies and phrases, on about eight pages octavo.

2. In 1857, I tested Lichtenstein's vocabulary, by examining a few Bushmen and Bushwomen from the neighbourhoods of Colesberg and Burghersdorp, who were at that time at Robben Island, and in the Cape Town Gaol and House of Correction. The result of this examination was the discovery that the different Bushman dialects spoken within this Colony vary very little from each other, and that one language, quite different from Hottentot, is spoken by all these Bushmen. The words thus ascertained were incorporated in a Manuscript Comparative "Vocabulary of the Dialects of the Hottentots and Bushmen," forming No. 36 of Sir George Grey's Library.

3. In 1858, the Rev. C. F. Wuras presented to Sir George Grey a short Manuscript Grammar of the Bushman language, on eight pages quarto. Sir George took this manuscript with him to England in 1859, but it did not return with him in 1860, nor did it arrive here with the main bulk of his library in 1863. It is probably now at Kauwau, New Zealand; but Sir George has promised to send us either the manuscript itself or a copy of it.

4. In 1861, the Rev. G. Krönlein sent a few words and sentences of another (Transgariepian) dialect of the Bushman language. The MS., of seven pages octavo, is in the Grey Library; and this material has been worked out by me in an exhaustive Concordance of sixty-five pages folio.

5. About five years later (in 1866), an opportunity was afforded me of examining two Bushman prisoners from the Achterveld, who were transferred for this purpose, by the order of His Excellency Sir P. E. Wodehouse, from the Breakwater to the Town Prison. The words and sentences then collected (mainly from the lips of the elder of these two men) fill about sixty-six pages quarto, whilst an English index to these phrases occupies forty-eight pages folio, and an alphabetical vocabulary of those Bushman words, which contain no click, is on twenty-five further pages folio. Some remarks upon the language, based upon these materials, are to be found in my paper on "The Bushman Language," pp. 269-284 of "The Cape and its People," Cape Town, 1869.

6. In 1870, the presence of twenty-eight Bushmen at the Breakwater afforded an unprecedentedly rare opportunity of obtaining good instructors in the language. On the recommendation of the Rev. G. Fisk, the best-behaved Bushman boy was selected, and in August of that year, he was placed with me for this purpose by Her Majesty's Colonial Government. This experiment was found to answer; but it was taken into consideration that one young Bushman alone, would soon lose a good deal of accuracy in speaking his mother-tongue, and, further, that the boy in question could relate hardly any of the numerous tales and fables which are met with in the traditionary literature of this nation. On these grounds His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly was pleased to direct that one of the most intelligent of the old Bushmen should join the other. Both are still with me. Their term of penal servitude expired in the middle of the year 1871; and they have since remained of their own free will. In order to achieve the object of these inquiries (a thorough knowledge of the Bushman language and literature), the presence of these men (or other Bushmen) is necessary for several years; at least four;—two and a half of which have already expired. And soon after the arrival of the elder Bushman, I took steps to ascertain the where-

abouts of their wives, in order to induce them to join their husbands. But although inquiries have been made in many different directions, they have as yet led to no result,—and I therefore fear that ere long one or both of the Bushmen will leave me.

7. What has been written down from the lips of the Bushmen, consists of more than four thousand columns (half pages quarto) of text, besides a dozen genealogical tables, and other genealogical, geographical, and astrological, &c., notices. The following is a general analysis of the texts which have been collected,—with regard to which it is to be remarked that the pages under the letter B refer to texts collected by myself, and those under L to collections made for me.

I. The Mantis.

The Mantis	L 500— 503
His wife and their things	L 670— 677
The Eland	L 489— 493
Do.	L 504— 519
Origin of the Moon	L 482— 486
Do.	B 379— 399
Do.	B 421— 460
Do.	B 501— 526
Do.	B 528— 590
Do.	B 1497—1575 (unfinished.)
The Mantis and Ichneumon go to the Lion's house	L 519— 546
Fighting the Cat	L 547— 565
Do.	L 966— 978
The Great Tortoise	L 565— 624
Do.	L 811— 832
Ostriches	L 677— 737
!goë!kweitentu (a being whose eyes are in his feet instead of in his head)	L 935— 966
Do. do. do. do.	B 396— 420
Do. do. do. do.	B 461— 507
Do. do. do. do.	B 1027—1119
Do. do. do. do.	B 1121—1153 (unfinished.)
!kâken !kaka ʃaui, and the Ichneumon's discourse	L 1965—2212
The Mantis rebuked by the Ichneumon	L 978— 996
Further adventures	L 997—1051

II. Moon and Sun.

The Heavenly Bodies	L 200 & 201
Moon and Stars	B 291— 294
Sun, Moon, and Stars	L 214— 217
Do.	B 377— 379
Moon and Sun	L 258—287 & 292
Do.	L 478— 481
Do.	L 654— 663
Moon stabbed by Sun	B 2155—2156
Moon and Little Hare	L 664— 670
Do.	B 1403—1458
Prayers to Moon	L 219— 222
Do.	B 294
Prayer to Sun	B 315 & 316
Children who throw the sleeping Sun into the Sky	L 487— 499

III. Stars.

The Girl who made the Milky Way	L 2505—2511
The same Girl making Stars..	L 2517—2520
Jupiter (Day's Heart) and his Discourses	L 292 & 293
Do. do.	L 1432—1548
Do. do.	L 1653—1710
Jupiter	B 645— 749
Do.	B 751— 920
Do.	B 931— 997
Do. (the black Crow calling the Jackal)	B 921— 930 (unfinished.)
The two Lions (Pointers to the Southern Cross).. ..	L 305— 316
The Lion Star	L 237— 240
Do.	B 303
The Lion and the Birds	L 278— 284
The Lion and the Tortoise	L 316— 319
Do. do.	B 1362—1392 (unfinished).
Another Star (Ixohai)	L 294 & 295

IV. Fables.

The Anteater's Laws	L 138— 150
The Anteater, Springbok, and Lynx	L 323— 346
Do. do. 2nd version.. ..	L 383— 463
The Hyena and the Lion	L 256 rev.— 260
Do. 2nd version	L 362— 368
Resurrection of Ostrich	B 1171—1336 (unfinished.)

V. Legends.

Stones which kill the Thrower	L 125 & 126
Men enchanted by a Girl, and changed into trees ..	L 295— 305
The Bushman who took a Lion's Cub, and brought it up as a Dog	L 2320—2504
Do. do. do. do. ..	L 2597—2674 (unfinished.)

VI. Poetry.

Incantation (Names of Animals)	L 119, 127
Do. do.	L 131, 132
Do. do.	L 189— 195
Do. do.	B 197 & 249
Verses to the Sun..	L 251
The Old Woman's Song	L 158
The Return Home	B 216 rev. & 217 rev.
Rhyme	L 476
Verses	L 120, 123— 125
Original Songs	L 95 & 96

VII. The Lion, the Leopard, the Jackal, and the Hyena.

The Lion and the Giraffe	L 255— 257
Do.	B 320— 325
The doings of the Lions	L 1051—1170
Bushman killed by a Lion, and search for the missing man..	L 892— 920

VIII. Of other Animals.

IX. Jantje Tooren (our elder Bushman).

X. Translations (from the Dutch).

Lion and Bushman	B 158 & 159
Woman transformed into Lion	L 114— 118
Do.	B 161— 167
The Lost Child	B 171— 177

XI. Customs and Superstitions.

Cutting off top of little finger	L. 357— 359
Piercing ears and nose	L 360 & 361
What a Girl must eat and avoid	L 2520—2524
Poisoned Arrows	L 780— 782
Sneezing	L 634— 653
The Bushman Doctor	L 273— 275
The Rain-maker	L 2213—2263
Rain-making	L 2264—2304 (unfinished.)
Bushman Presentiments	L 2531—2565 (unfinished.)
Death, &c.	L 1173—1396 (unfinished.)

XII. Sentences and Words.

Bushman Tribes	B 349
Genealogies	B 359
Do.	B 360— 362
Do.	B 364 & 365
Do.	B 368— 373
Do.	B 376
Do.	L 476—506 (III. I)
Degrees of Relationship	B 352 & 353
Parts of the Body	B 351, 352
Do.	B 363
Do.	L 196— 198
Names of Animals	B 358, 359
Do.	B 366— 368
Do.	L 158— 188
Do.	L 288— 291
Names of Birds' Eggs	L 182 & 183
Salutations, &c.	L 250 & 251
Sentences and Words	B 67— 157 &c., &c.
Do.	L 1— 94
Do.	L 97—114, 118
Do.	L 120— 130
Do.	L 134— 137
Do.	L 199— 210
Do.	L 476—478, 500
Do.	&c., &c.

8. The above texts are, to a great extent, already accompanied by as literal an English translation as could yet be achieved. The further process of translation will be materially facilitated by the dictionaries in course of preparation. An English-Bushman Vocabulary of 142 pages, and a Bushman-English one of 600 pages folio contain the results of the earlier studies, which are now being greatly modified and corrected by our better knowledge of the language. Of

the texts, more than a dozen stories are as yet unfinished, and in the course of dictation, although some of them already extend over more than some hundreds of pages.

9. The main importance of this Bushman literature lies in the mythological character of the stories under I.—III., in which animals and heavenly objects are personified. In this characteristic the Bushman literature shows a marked difference from that of the Bântu nations (Kafirs, Betsuânas, Damara, &c.) who have legends, but, strictly speaking, no mythologies. The Bushman literature most nearly resembles that of their neighbours the Hottentots, and also that of the most primitive mythological stages of other more northern nations, whose languages either are sex-denoting, or may have branched off from the Sex-denoting languages, losing the sex-denoting characteristics. To this latter class of languages the Bushman also seems to belong, and (in contradistinction to the Hottentot, in which the gender of the nouns is everywhere clearly marked by the endings and maintained by the concord), it has no genders which have any reference to the distinctions of sex. If it ever were sex-denoting, it has now lost those signs of gender which so clearly mark the grammatical gender in Hottentot. Instead of eight different forms for each pronoun, as in Hottentot (masculine singular, feminine singular, common singular, masculine plural, feminine plural, common plural, masculine dual, and common dual),—the Bushman has only two forms,—one which is only used in the singular (*ha* "he, she, it," *ā*, "which, who, that") and another which is mainly used for the plural (*hi* "they," *ē*, "which, who, that"). I say purposely "mainly used for the plural," for, curiously enough, the plural form is frequently employed in Bushman, where we should use the singular, and where, in fact, the singular is indicated by the Bushman himself, by the addition of the first numeral, or some other clearly singular form. The fact seems to be that there are in Bushman two classes of nouns in the singular, viz., one which has the forms *ha* and *ā*, &c., for its corresponding pronouns, and the other with the forms *hi* and *ē*;—whilst the plural of both classes has only the one form for each pronoun,—this being at the same time one which outwardly agrees with the second form of the singular.*

Again, in the formation of the plural of nouns in the HOTTENTOT, great regularity prevails, and the endings of nouns in the singular number (indicating at the same time their gender) are exchanged, in the plural and dual, for other corresponding endings. Thus, Hottentot nouns terminating in -B or -P (masc. sing.) generally have in the plural the ending -KU (masc. plur.), and in the dual the ending -KHA (masc. dual). Likewise nouns ending in -S (fem. sing.) usually exchange this in the plural for the termination -TI (fem. plur.), and in the dual for -RA (comm. dual). The common singular termination -I similarly gives place in the plural to the ending -N or -IN (comm. plural), and in the dual to the ending -RA (comm. dual). There are few exceptions to the regularity of these grammatical changes in Hottentot. In BUSHMAN, on the contrary, the greatest irregularity prevails with regard to the forms of the plural of the nouns, and from fifty to sixty different ways of forming the plural occur, at the least, in this language. It seems as if the most original form here were a reduplication of the noun, and that this reduplication (more or less abbreviated), together with the use of certain other particles or variations of the stem of the noun, has given rise to the great multiplicity of the forms.

With these striking grammatical differences, both languages possess many obvious traits in common. The vocative *e.g.* is formed in Bushman with the ending *-we*, and in Hottentot by a terminal *-e* added to the pronoun of the second person.

The exclusive form of the prefixed pronoun of the first person plural ("we," *i.e.*, "I and he, she, it, or they," excluding the person addressed) is identical in Hottentot and Bushman.

* This is the only trace as yet found of that division of the nouns into classes which is effected by the concord.

The relative form of the verb (corresponding to the Kafir one in *-ela*) is in Hottentot formed by the suffix *-ba*, and in Bushman by the suffix *-a*.

The reduplication of the stem of a verb, in Hottentot, as well as in Bushman, can be used to give the verb a causative or transitive meaning.

There are many other similarities in structure, and there are also a good many words which appear to be of common origin. Of these, however, a number at once appear to be only foreign words in one of these languages, introduced from the other in consequence of the contiguity of the two nations. Such, for example, are the numerous abstract terms which the Bushman has evidently adopted from the Hottentot, as the verbs "to learn," "to teach," "to know," "to write," &c. There remains, however, a large number of other words, which probably have not been taken over from one language to the other, but have descended from a common source. But, as the principles of correspondence between the sounds of the two languages have not yet been ascertained, no safe comparison on a firm scientific basis can at present be established.

On the whole, we may safely conclude that the Bushman language is certainly not nearer akin to the Hottentot than *e.g.* the English language is to the Latin; but it may be that the distance between Bushman and Hottentot is indeed far greater than between the two above-mentioned languages.