

speak in common of all the other wives of their paternal parent as "mothers;" and, as a general rule, there is a surprising amount of harmony maintained in the household under the circumstances. According to the old and time-honoured custom of the Kaffirs, the father's property in his daughters was so absolute and complete, that his sole will determined all matrimonial arrangements, and he possessed, and not unfrequently exercised, the right of punishing a refractory child who refused to obey his commands with death. Since the subjection of the Kaffir chiefs to British supremacy and rule, all coercion of girls to an unacceptable marriage has been generally forbidden, and in any case where an appeal is made against parental authority upon this ground, the magistrates discountenance, and even punish, its exercise. It is the intention of the colonial government, at the earliest possible opportunity, to introduce some arrangement which shall make a full and clear declaration of a woman's personal consent indispensable to the legality of a native marriage. In the meantime two very important alterations in the old Kaffir practice have already been brought about. Every marriage now consummated is held to be irrevocable and final, so far as the parents of the woman are concerned; and a widow is now free to marry any one that pleases her without reference to the opinion or will of her natural guardian. These important modifications have been made by the Lieutenant-Governor, acting in his capacity of supreme chief, and have received the general assent of the natives on the ground that they admit them to be just and reasonable. It is obvious that some caution and judgment is required in the introduction of changes that are directly aimed at the root of a practice which is intimately bound up with the customs, habits, ideas, and laws of a race, and which the people believe to have been created with them.

Mr. Crawford considers the negro to be a very unmanageable and unpromising piece of humanity. He remarks of him that he has no literature, and no architecture; that he cannot tame elephants; that his religion is nothing but witchcraft, his wars merely the incursions of savages, and his government only a brutalized despotism. Without at present meddling with the inferences which Mr. Crawford draws, it must be admitted here that these allegations apply as accurately to the Kaffir as they do to the pure negro. It is a very remarkable fact in human history, that the Kaffir, with such inherent capabilities, should have remained utterly savage so long; that even, after seeing with his own eyes the wonders that are worked by his white cousins, in matters that come so immediately home to him, as flocks, herds, and food crops, he should still be willing, if left alone, to lead the indolent, unproductive, and unprogressive life that has been described. Whatever may be the case in regard to the principle that Sir S. W. Baker enunciated so prominently at the last meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, namely, that all negro races would infallibly fall back into barbarism, if left to themselves, there can be no doubt, at any rate, that these races will not advance out of barbarism, if so left. But here there occurs one consideration, that perhaps has not yet received all the attention it deserves, and that really carries with it much important and practical suggestion. Mr. Crawford argues, "The negroes are uncivilizable, or nearly so, for, after years of social existence, they have no literature." May it not be that the negro races have not advanced into civilization *because* they have no literature? A race which is incapable of originating a literature, may, nevertheless, be quite capable of being deeply and permanently influenced by a literature that is brought to them from without. This literature may indeed ultimately prove to be the very panacea and influence that makes progress possible and advance permanent. It is, by no means an unheard of thing in human history, that races have received and benefited by a written and recorded language, although they had failed to contrive the instrument for themselves.

It is a very curious, and certainly a most noteworthy fact, bearing indirectly but instructively upon this view, that the wild

Kaffir, even when quite removed from the influence of white men, and from civilized appliances and practices, has, nevertheless, an education of his own. This becomes strikingly apparent to even the most careless and most casual observer, when the young men and the old men of the race are compared. The young men are all wild, impulsive, restless, and full of savage fire, which generally burns itself out in howling, dancing, boasting, and laughing, but which is quite capable, as proved in Chaka's experience, of being turned to less desirable account. The old men are all quiet, astute, thoughtful, and full of "wise saws and instances." The countenances of the young men are commonly savage and furtive, even when good humoured. The countenances of the old men are constantly dignified, grave, and intelligent. In Zululand, at this present hour, the young men are nearly all turbulent, quarrelsome, boastful, and aggressive; the old men are nearly all quiet, peaceful, and full of admiration and friendship for their Dutch and English neighbours. There is a very simple and obvious reason for this difference. The young men are all of the raw material of barbarism; the old men are all *educated*! The education of the Kaffir race is talk. The remark of Sir S. W. Baker and others, that the negroes acquire their full intellectual development at a very early period, and are incapable of subsequent advance, certainly is not true in regard to the *Natal* Kaffirs. The wild Kaffir leads a life of indolence, and puts the amount of drudgery that is requisite to provide for the absolute essentials of this indolent life upon his women. But he also leads a life of *gossip*; he talks incessantly, and much of his talk concerns the doings of his relatives and neighbours, and the general relations of his social state. When he walks forth over the sunny hills to pay his visit to some neighbouring or distant kraal, he carries with him matters that have to be made there the theme of patient discussion and grave deliberation. It is not possible for men to gossip through long years without doing some thinking as well, and, wherever there is thinking, there is also intellect and progress. But, in the case of the wild Kaffir, the progress is individual, and not collective. Each man has to go through the same process for himself, and the result dies when the man dies. Tradition may carry on some very small shadow of the sum total and gain to the next generation, but the main bulk of the personal advancement and experience must disappear. And can it be said that it would not be the same, even in England, if there were no permanent and recorded accumulation to be transferred on from generation to generation? if there were no books and no formal teaching? Men may say that the negro races cannot be raised much, or at all, above their present stand points, and they may be right, but, at any rate, an appeal necessarily lies from such judgments to events and time; and, not until it has been seen what the modifications are, that a formal, a designed, and a well considered training and education can introduce, can the question of Kaffir civilization be held to have received a practical settlement. It yet remains to state, indeed, that something has already been actually achieved in Natal, which does give promise of a higher capability in the native race than the theory of unprogressive stagnation and ready retrogression would allow. This is reserved for another opportunity.—*Intellectual Observer*.

### Oldest City in the World.

Damascus is the oldest city in the world. Tyre and Sidon have crumbled on the shore; Baalbec is a ruin; Palmyra lies buried in the sands of the desert; Nineveh and Babylon have disappeared from the shores of the Tigris and Euphrates. Damascus remains what it was before the days of Abraham—a centre of trade and travel, an island of verdure in the desert, a "predestinated capital," with martial and sacred associations extending beyond thirty centuries.

It was near Damascus that Saul of Tarsus saw the light from heaven "above the brightness of the sun;" the street which is