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"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xii. 4.

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## GENERAL LITERATURE.

*From the N. Y. Observer.*

### AFRICANER, THE SAVAGE CHIEFTAIN.

Most of the readers of missionary intelligence twenty or five-and-twenty years ago were familiar with the name of Africaner, the savage chieftain of the Namaquas of Southern Africa. He was converted in connection with the London Society's mission, in the year 1815, and died in 1822, having been one of the most remarkable samples of the transforming power of the Christian religion that is to be found on record.

The Rev. Mr. Moffat, who for some years was the religious teacher and guide of Africaner, in his work entitled "Missionary Labors and Scenes in Southern Africa," furnishes many interesting statements respecting this converted chief, some of which are given below. Of his character before conversion Mr. Moffat says—

As I was standing with a Namaqua chief, looking at Africaner, in a supplicating attitude, entreating parties ripe for a battle, to live at peace with each other, "Look," said the wondering chief, pointing to Africaner, "there is the man, once the lion, at whose roar even the inhabitants of distant hamlets fled from their homes! Yes, and I," patting his chest with his hand, "have for fear of his approach fled with my people, our wives and our babes, to the mountain glen, or to the wilderness, and spent nights among beasts of prey, rather than gaze on the eyes of this lion, or hear his roar."

It was evident to me, as I approached the boundaries of the colony, on the way to Namaqualand, that the farmers, who of course had not one good word to say of Africaner, were sceptical to the last degree about his reported conversion, and most unceremoniously predicted my destruction. One said he would set me up for a mark for his boys to shoot at, and another that he would strip off my skin and make a drum of it to dance to; another most consoling prediction was, that he would make a drinking cup of my skull. I believe they were serious, and especially a kind motherly lady, who, wiping the tear from her eye, bade me farewell, saying, "Had you been an old man it would have been nothing, for you would soon have died whether or no; but you are young and going to become a prey to that monster."

Soon after Africaner's conversion, Mr. Moffat, having gone to his residence, thus describes his first interview with him:—

After remaining an hour or more in this situation, the chief, Christian Africaner, made his appearance, and after the usual salutation, inquired if I was the missionary appointed by the directors in London; to which I replied in the affirmative. This seemed to afford him much pleasure, and he added, that as I was young, he hoped that I should live long with him and his people. He then ordered a number of women to come; I was rather puzzled to know what he intended by sending for women, till they arrived, bearing bundles of native mats

and long sticks, like fishing rods. Africaner, pointing to a spot of ground, said, "there you must build a house for the missionary." A circle was instantly formed, and the women evidently delighted with the job, fixed the poles, tied them down in the hemispheric form, and covered them with the mats, all ready for habitation, in the course of little more than half an hour. Since that time I have seen houses built of all descriptions, and assisted in the construction of a good many myself, but I confess I never witnessed such expedition. Hottentot houses (for such they may be called, being confined to the different tribes of that nation) are at best not very comfortable. I lived nearly six months in this hut, which very frequently required tightening and fastening after a storm. When the sun shone it was unbearably hot, when the rain fell I came in for a share of it, when the wind blew I had frequently to decamp to escape the dust, and in addition to these little inconveniences, any hungry cur of a dog that wished a night's lodging would force itself through the frail wall, and not unfrequently deprive me of my anticipated meal for the coming day, and I have more than once found a serpent coiled up in a corner. Nor were these all the contingencies of such a dwelling, for as the cattle belonging to the village had no fold, but strolled about, I have been compelled to start up from a sound sleep and try to defend myself and my dwelling from being crushed to pieces by the rage of two bulls which had met to fight a nocturnal duel.

Of Africaner's diligence and success in acquiring religious knowledge, Mr. Moffat writes:

To reading, in which he was not very fluent, he attended with all the assiduity and energy of a youthful believer; the Testament became his constant companion, and his profiting appeared unto all. Often I have seen him under the shadow of a great rock, nearly the livelong day, eagerly perusing the pages of Divine inspiration, or in his hut he would sit, unconscious of the affairs of a family around, or the entrance of a stranger, with his eye gazing on the blessed book, and his mind wrapt up in things divine. Many were the nights he sat with me, on a great stone at the door of my habitation, conversing with me till the dawn of another day, on creation, providence, redemption, and the glories of the heavenly world. He was like the bee, gathering honey from every flower, and at such seasons he would, from what he had stored up in the course of the day's reading, repeat generally in the very language of Scripture, those passages which he could not fully comprehend. He had no commentary, except the living voice of his teacher, nor marginal references, but he soon discovered the importance of consulting parallel passages, which an excellent memory enabled him readily to find. He did not confine his expanding mind to the volume of revelation, though he had been taught by experience that that contained heights and depths and lengths and breadths, which no man comprehends. He was led to look upon the book of nature, and he would regard the

heavenly orbs with an inquiring look, cast his eye on the earth beneath his tread, and regarding both as displays of creative power and infinite intelligence, would inquire about endless space and infinite duration. I have often been amused, when sitting with him and others, who wished to hear his questions answered, and descriptions given of the majesty, extent, and number of the works of God; he would at last rub his hands on his head, exclaiming, "I have heard enough, I feel as if my head was too small, and as if it would swell with these great subjects."

During the whole period I lived there, I do not remember having occasion to be grieved with him, or to complain of any part of his conduct; his very faults seemed to "lean to virtue's side." One day when seated together, I happened, in absence of mind, to be gazing steadfastly on him. It arrested his attention, and he modestly inquired the cause. I replied, I was trying to picture to myself your carrying fire and sword through the country, and I could not think how eyes like yours could smile at human woe. He answered not, but shed a flood of tears! He zealously seconded my efforts to improve the people in cleanliness and industry; and it would have made any one smile to have seen Christian Africaner and myself superintending the school children, now about 120, washing themselves at the fountain.

Of the contrast between Africaner as the ferocious savage, and as the docile and tender-hearted Christian, Mr. Moffat says—

It may be emphatically said of Africaner, that "he wept with those that wept," for wherever he heard of a case of distress, thither his sympathies were directed, and notwithstanding all his spoils of former years, he had little to spare, but he was ever on the alert to stretch out a helping hand to the widow and fatherless. At an early period I also became an object of his charity, for finding out that I sometimes sat down to a scanty meal, he presented me with two cows, which, though in that country giving little milk, often saved me many a hungry night, to which I was exposed. He was a man of peace, and though I could not expound to him that the "sword of the magistrate" implied, that he was calmly to sit at home and see bushmen or marauders carry off his cattle and slay his servants; yet so fully did he understand and appreciate the principles of the Gospel of peace, that nothing could grieve him more than to hear of individuals or villages contending with one another. He, who was formerly like a firebrand, spreading discord, enmity and war among the neighbouring tribes, would now make any sacrifice to prevent any thing like a collision between two contending parties, and when he might have raised his arm, and dared them to lift a spear or draw a bow, he would stand in the attitude of a suppliant, and entreat them to be reconciled to each other; and pointing to his past life, ask, "What have I now of all the battles I have fought, and all the cattle I took, but shame and remorse?" At an early period of my labours among the people, I was deep-