



The Bosjemans, or Bushmen of South Africa.

Some of my young readers will have heard, and some perhaps seen, some very curious people exhibited in London, and called Bosjemans or Bushmen. They come from South Africa, and are probably the lowest class of human beings in the world. It is amongst such people as these that Mr. Moffat laboured, and I have thought some account of them would not be out of place in your little Paper.

The country of these people lies to the north of the Cape Colony in South Africa, between the Orange River and a range of mountains running from Roggeveld eastward, to the Snowy mountains. It is a peculiarly barren and inhospitable tract; and sometimes whole years pass over without a single drop of rain falling. Amongst the animals that inhabit the district, and on which the people sometimes feed, are the Ostrich, the Eland-antelope, the Rhinoceros, and a sort of Sheep introduced by former settlers in the country. The poor Bushmen, however, have not always weapons sufficiently strong or suitable to attack these larger creatures, and they, therefore, generally pursue and live upon

lizards, serpents, ants, and grasshoppers. The woods abound with fruits, and there are some kind of plants the stalks and leaves of which they chew to quench their thirst. The Bushmen are very great eaters. Some travellers once gave a sheep to five Bushmen, and, though they had that day had plenty to eat, they at once killed it, roasted it, and in an hour had eaten it all. They eat their food nearly raw. The sheep was not skinned, but great pieces were cut out by them, and pushed into the ashes of a fire of wood they had kindled, and when just warmed through, were pulled out and devoured. They tear the food to pieces with their teeth, and do not use knives to cut it up.

The Bushmen have no houses nor huts, and live almost like wild beasts in the forests. In winter they sleep in caverns amongst the hills, or holes in the ground in the plains. These holes are about five or six feet long, and are of an oval shape. They are only a few inches deep, and have no roof. If there is much wind, they heap up some twigs or branches on the side from which it blows; but against rain