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PARK
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THE
BUSINESS



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NEW YORK
1885

of climate, scenery and elevation of the pear-shaped continent.

Three vast patches of colour and four great rivers suggest a general outline of Africa's topography. The yellow north—the great deserts of Egypt and the Sahara stretching from sea to sea; the dark green heart of the continent—the forests and bush of West Africa, the Congo basin and beyond; the light green of south and east—lands of veldt and plain, covered in many places with long grass. The four great rivers: the Nile, rising in the blue lakes on the Equator and flowing for some 4,000 miles through the yellow deserts to the Mediterranean; the Niger, winding a tortuous course of about 2,600 miles from near the Western Coast to its delta in the Bight of Benin; the Congo, 3,000 miles in length, watering the vast forests of the equatorial region; and the Zambesi, flowing for 1,600 miles from Angola in the West to the Indian Ocean in the East.

Africa has also been compared to an inverted dish. The flat region along the coast corresponding to the lip of the dish, varies in width; where the coastal region is narrow, the country is comparatively healthy; where, however, the coast lands broaden out before the ascent to the interior begins, swamps make possible the description of the coast as the "white man's grave." Behind this low-lying coast rise, like a natural rampart, with varying steepness, the slopes which encircle the inner uplands and plateaux.

Images of God Carved in Ebony.—The Bantu people who received Diogo Cão were not the original inhabitants of "the continent of surprises." Wave after wave of varied immigration had swept through trackless forest and over pathless veldt, across river and stream, peopling the great continent and opening it up from its primeval condition. The aborigines of Africa appear to have been races of yellow-

skinned PYGMIES, scarcely three feet tall, who dwelt in caves and secured their living by snaring small animals and birds. These tiny people spoke a language of clicks, using only nouns and verbs. At a somewhat remote period the Pygmies felt the impact of the BUSHMEN who, probably, entered Africa from Arabia by way of Abyssinia or Somaliland. These Bushmen, a race of some artistic ability, spoke a more developed language than that of the Pygmies and were better equipped, using bows and arrows to bring down game. Pushing down past the great lakes they fought their way through the Pygmy tribes to the southernmost extremity of the continent till at last they settled in Southwest Africa, between the River Kunene and the Kalahari desert.

Another migratory stream was that of the HOTTENTOTS, probably descendants of the Hamites (themselves a blend of Semites and some darker race) who dwelt originally in the northeastern section of the continent. Being driven farther and farther to the south as other tribes pressed behind them, they settled among the Bushmen, with whom they intermarried. Their physique, habits and speech all became modified by this further intermixture.

Next comes on the scene the NEGRO proper. From his original home somewhere in Asia this race spread to the Malay Archipelago, New Guinea, the Philippines and Fiji, Arabia and tropical Africa. The race must have lived in Africa for thousands of years, for there was a Negro element in the population of ancient Egypt, and the Negro, like the Pygmy, is depicted on the walls of ancient Egyptian buildings. From Egypt, the Negroes spread due west through Nigeria to the Atlantic, and at a much slower rate into the Congo forests and down the centre of Africa. At the present time the Negro races

inhabit a relatively small area of the continent, being almost confined to the country between the Senegal and the Niger.

The last thousand years before the birth of Christ was an important era in the history of Africa. This period comprises the first determined attempts of Arab, Phœnician, Persian, Greek, Carthaginian and Roman to penetrate Africa. How far traders in those distant historical times penetrated the remote African jungles may be a secret forever hidden. An indication that seekers after gold, that "scarlet woman" of Africa, established themselves in the depths of the continent is found by some in the colossal stone ruins at Zimbabwe in Rhodesia. Defence works and traces of an ancient temple indicate the importance of the settlement. In and near these ruins are to be found implements of the ancient gold-seekers, picks, crucibles, gold-wiring presses and tools for engraving metal. Many of the old workings remain to-day as they were centuries ago. Who were these prospectors and whence came they? Commerce between Arabian ports on the Red Sea and the East Coast of Africa flourished even when the West was wholly sealed to the outside world. It has been suggested that modern Sofala, a seaport in Mozambique, is identical with the Ophir whence Solomon's ships fetched the gold for the adornment of the Temple of the Lord Jehovah in Jerusalem. African tribes readily confuse L with R, and the prefix "So" in the native language of that country signifies nothing more than "at the." Hence Ophir in native idiom might become So-fa-la.

This same millennium probably also witnessed in Africa a remarkable internal convulsion which left an ineffaceable impression on the southern half of the continent. Hamitic tribes of the Galla type intermixed with their Negro pupils and serfs. From this stock seems to have arisen the BANTU race which

later split up into hundreds of tribes such as the Zulu, Xosa, Barotse, Matabele and Ovimbundu. Differing in tribal customs and in words used, the general structure of the languages used by these tribes still remains the same, hence ethnologists apply the term Bantu (from A-bantu, i.e., the people) as a general term to cover the race. Bantu physical types show every variety between Hamite and Negro, some resembling the Negro, whilst others, more Semitic in feature, have prominent noses and comparatively thin lips. In color the whole gamut of African tints is found—tea, russet, coffee, chocolate and licorice.

Urged by some extraordinary race impulse from within or without, such as famine conditions or war, this people invaded southern and southwestern Africa, spreading over the country, absorbing or exterminating Hottentots and Bushmen. A tendency to cleavage and the setting-up of independent communities is a feature of Bantu life and the spreading out of the race was natural. From time to time a genius, able to express himself only in terms of conquest and pitiless subjugation, would arise and push Bantu occupation beyond previous limits until the whole of the east and south of the continent was brought under their control save for a few isolated communities of Bushmen and Hottentots. One of these Bantu hordes may have exterminated the gold workers at Zimbabwe.

Bantus in Angola.—The inhabitants of West Central Africa from a point north of the Congo to the mouth of the Kunene River on the south belong to this great Bantu stock. During the period which marked the Bantu migration from the northeast of the continent to the south, one stream turned westward into what is now known as Angola, subjugating the native Bushmen, killing the men, but keeping the women as slave wives. A few Bushmen aborig-

ines still live in Angola on the Okavangu River, being known to the Bantu as the Va Sekele.

Of the authentic history of the Bantu tribes in Angola little is known until about the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of our era. Andrew Battel, a fisherman of Leigh, in Essex, England, engaged in a piratical expedition, was captured by the Portuguese in 1589 and sent to Angola as a prisoner, where he dwelt among the fierce Jagas for twenty-one months. These Jagas, who hailed originally from Sierra Leone, were not so much a tribe as a miscellaneous horde of ruthless cannibals who lived by plunder, and, when they had devastated one district, moved to another. Once when raiding, the Jagas reached the Congo district hundreds of miles to the north and meeting Portuguese traders they actually offered them choice portions of human flesh as food. Battel adds that the Jagas killed all their own young children who were unfit to march with them and recruited their numbers by absorbing the youths of both sexes captured in their raids. The chronicler says, "They make war by enchantments and take the Devil's counsel in their exploits." This devastating horde, somewhat changing their mode of life, became the forefathers of the present Ganguelas and the Va Chokwe (the Ba-jok or Va-Kiokue). Through a royal romance,¹ descendants of these Jagas contributed to the stock which went to build up a portion of the great Ovimbundu peoples with which this book deals.

When Livingstone passed through Angola, he encountered much difficulty from the Chokwe, whom he considered the fiercest tribe in Central Africa; to this day the Chokwe retain their reputation for ferocity and churlishness. Their sharp pointed teeth, the invariable sign of the man eater, give the

¹ See ch. II, p. 24.

owner a ferocious appearance; a Chokwe's smile reminds one of a crocodile, a shark or a pike.