

central region regularly collect the seeds of a wild grass, the *Pennisetum distichum*; in another district he saw women collecting the seeds of a *Poa* by swinging a sort of basket through the rich meadow-land. Near Tete, Livingstone observed the natives collecting the seeds of a wild grass, and farther south, as Andersson informs me, the natives largely use the seed of a grass of about the size of canary-seed, which they boil in water. They eat also the roots of certain reeds, and every one has read of the Bushmen prowling about and digging up with a fire-hardened stake various roots. Similar facts with respect to the collection of seeds of wild grasses in other parts of the world could be given.⁷

Accustomed as we are to our excellent vegetables and luscious fruits, we can hardly persuade ourselves that the stringy roots of the wild carrot and parsnip, or the little shoots of the wild asparagus, or crabs, sloes, &c., should ever have been valued; yet, from what we know of the habits of Australian and South African savages, we need feel no doubt on this head. The inhabitants of Switzerland during the Stone-period largely collected wild crabs, sloes, bullaces, hips of roses, elderberries, beechmast, and other wild berries and fruit.⁸ Jemmy Button, a Fuegian on board the *Beagle*, remarked to me that the poor and acid black-currants of Tierra del Fuego were too sweet for his taste.

The savage inhabitants of each land, having found out by many and hard trials what plants were useful, or could be rendered useful by various cooking processes, would after a time take the first step in cultivation by planting them near their usual abodes. Livingstone⁹ states that the savage Batokas sometimes left wild fruit-trees standing in their gardens, and occasionally even planted them, "a practice

⁷ For instance, in both North and South America. Mr. Edgeworth ('Journal Proc. Linn. Soc.,' vol vi. Bot., 1862, p. 181) states that in the deserts of the Punjab poor women sweep up, "by a whisk into straw baskets," the seeds of four genera of grasses, namely, of *Agrostis*, *Panicum*, *Cenchrus*, and *Pennisetum*, as well as the seeds of four other genera belong-

ing to distinct families.

⁸ Prof. O. Heer, 'Die Pflanzen der Pfahlbauten, 1866, aus dem Neujahr. Naturforsch. Gesellschaft,' 1866; and Dr. H. Christ, in Rüttimeyer's 'Die Fauna der Pfahlbauten,' 1861, s. 226.

⁹ 'Travels,' p. 535. Du Chaillu, 'Adventures in Equatorial Africa,' 1861, p. 445.