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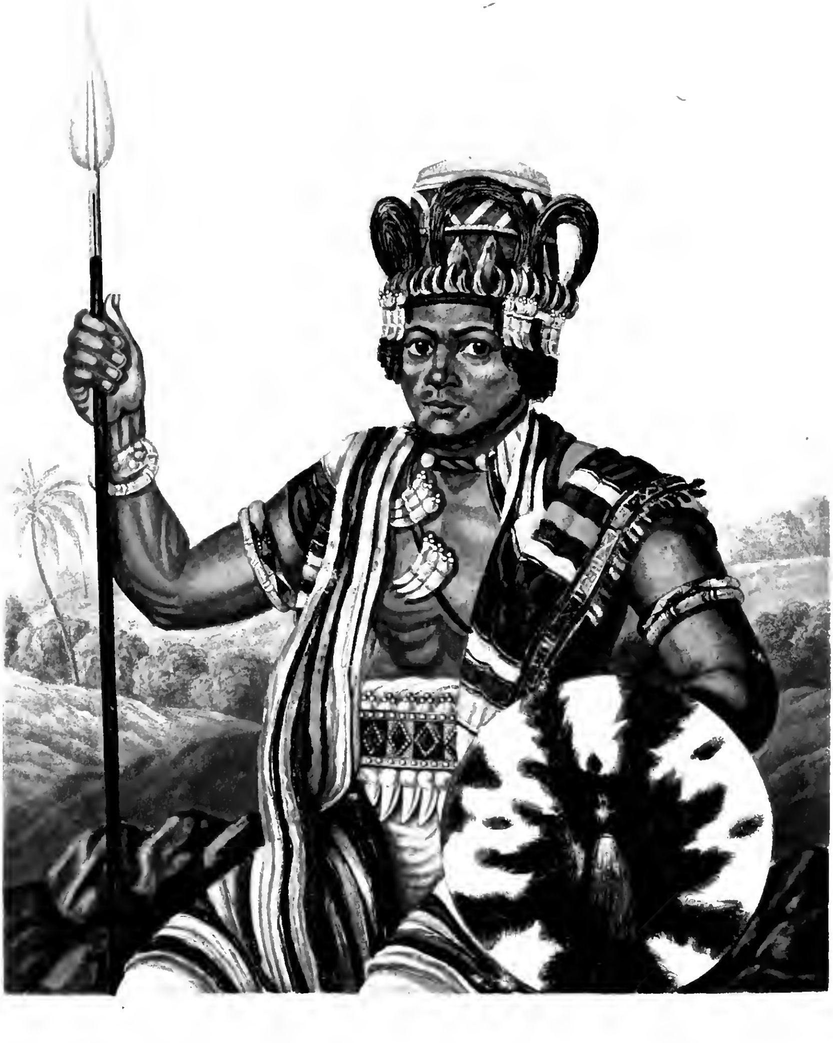

Rafaralahy.

Governor of Foule Point, Madagascar.

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HISTORY

OF

MADAGASCAR.

COMPRISING ALSO

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSION ESTABLISHED IN 1818: AND AN AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT OF THE RECENT MARTYRDOM OF RAFARAVAVY; AND OF THE PERSECUTION OF THE NATIVE CHRISTIANS.

Compiled chiefly from Original Documents,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM ELLIS,

Foreign Secretary to the London Missionary Society.

"TELL THE QUEEN OF MADAGASCAR FROM ME, THAT SHE CAN DO NOTHING SO BENEFICIAL FOR HER COUNTRY AS TO RECEIVE THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION."

Queen Adelaide to the Embassy from Madagascar.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

FISHER, SON, & CO.
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PREFACE.

THE materials for a large portion of the following work, were collected by the Missionaries in the island to which it relates, and forwarded to this country in the year 1830. It was then intended to present chiefly a history of the Protestant Mission in Madagascar, from its commencement in 1818, to the decease of Radama in 1828. This, it was proposed, to accompany by a description of the most remarkable customs of the Malagasy, biographical notices of the late king, and other distinguished personages; and an account of the abolition of the slave-trade in the island. When the documents were examined by the Directors of the London Missionary Society, to whom they were sent, it appeared desirable to extend the plan of the work, by including the history of the island from its discovery, to a later date than 1828; and early in 1833, I was requested

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to prepare the work for publication, adding such information as could be obtained from publications in this country—correspondence with the Missionaries—and the papers in the possession of the London Missionary Society.

Shortly after the period now referred to, circumstances occurring in Madagascar which rendered it expedient to postpone for a time the publication of the history, its preparation for the press was suspended; and although a very strong desire for information respecting the country and the people has been manifested, the delay that has taken place is the less to be regretted, as the work has been rendered more complete than it could have been, if published at any earlier period.

By the kindness of the Right Honourable Lord Glenelg, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, access has been obligingly granted to the voluminous and peculiarly interesting MS. journals of James Hastie, Esq., by whom the treaty for the abolition of the slave-trade was negociated, and who was, for many years, British agent at the capital of Madagascar.

In the early part of the work, the writings of Flacourt, Rochon, the narrative of Drury, and the life of Benyowsky, the History by Copland, as well as other works, have been used. Much valuable information has also been obtained from the island, in answer to specific inquiries sent to the Missionaries. Several of these, namely, Messrs. Jones, Griffiths, and Baker, have also visited England since the preparation of the work was commenced, and have readily furnished information, which has enabled me to enlarge and modify many of the original statements. Mr. Freeman has also cheerfully supplied much useful information respecting the recent history of the country, and has prepared a valuable paper on the native language, which is given as an Appendix to the first volume. The embellishments are chiefly from sketches taken on the spot, or from articles brought to this country; the outline of the map is copied from that published after the recent survey by Commodore Owen; and the names of places and persons are given by the Missionaries, or taken from other authorities.

To the distinguished nobleman to whom I am indebted for access to the documents in the Colonial Office, to Captain Moorsom, R.N., to the Author of "The Loss of the Winterton," and the Missionary Brethren who have rendered me valuable assistance in the preparation of the work, I would thus publicly acknowledge my obligations, especially to the Rev. J. J. Freeman, who, in order to aid in securing the greatest possible accuracy, has kindly inspected the following pages as they have passed through the press.

The history of Madagascar is, in many respects, highly instructive. It exhibits a branch of that singular and widely-scattered race inhabiting chiefly the coasts and islands of South-eastern Asia; preserving in their language, and many of their customs, unequivocal signs of identity, yet dwelling at a distance from the Malayan archipelago, or the groups of Polynesia, greater than, without the strongest evidence, we should have believed it possible for them to reach. It shows an interesting portion of the human family, gradually emerging from the ignorance and rudeness which characterise the earliest stages of society, exhibiting the intelligence and energy, and acquiring the comforts, of a civilized state. It further shows a people, with scarcely a single exception, friendly and hospitable to their visiters, until goaded to outrage and violence by ill-treatment, or rendered more corrupt than they were before, by the vicious influence and example of their visiters.

The work will also encourage the philanthropist in his career of undaunted and persevering benevolence, by exhibiting the success with which the iniquitous traffic in human beings had been prohibited, in what was once one of the most frequented slave-markets in the world.

Beyond these, and other points of deep and lasting interest, these volumes supply a faithful record of the means employed for introducing among five millions of our species, a written language, a knowledge of the use of letters, of some of the useful arts of civilized life, and an acquaintance with the sacred truths of Divine Revelation. The measure of visible success, which for a time attended these efforts, and the melancholy reverses they have recently experienced, with the fierce and destructive persecution which has lately burst forth, and raged with such fearful violence in Madagascar, have excited deep and general interest throughout our country. An account of this persecution—which continues to rage against the native Christians, from whose numbers, there is reason to fear, additions are still made to the noble army of martyrs who have sealed their testimony with their blood—will be found in these volumes, recorded with greater explicitness than in the statements hitherto made public.

I have availed myself, as far as practicable, of every means within my reach for rendering the work acceptable and useful to all interested in the history and prospects of Madagascar; with very few exceptions, the whole has been re-written, and arranged in the order in which it now appears, and will, it is hoped, not only be found a faithful record of the events it narrates, and the scenes it describes, but excite deep interest, and stimulate to fervent prayer on behalf of the church in the midst of flames, and the nation in the present crisis of its history; and excite more ardent desires, that in Madagascar, and every other portion of the heathen world, the Gospel may have free course, and be glorified, until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

WILLIAM ELLIS.

PENTONVILLE, October 10th, 1838.

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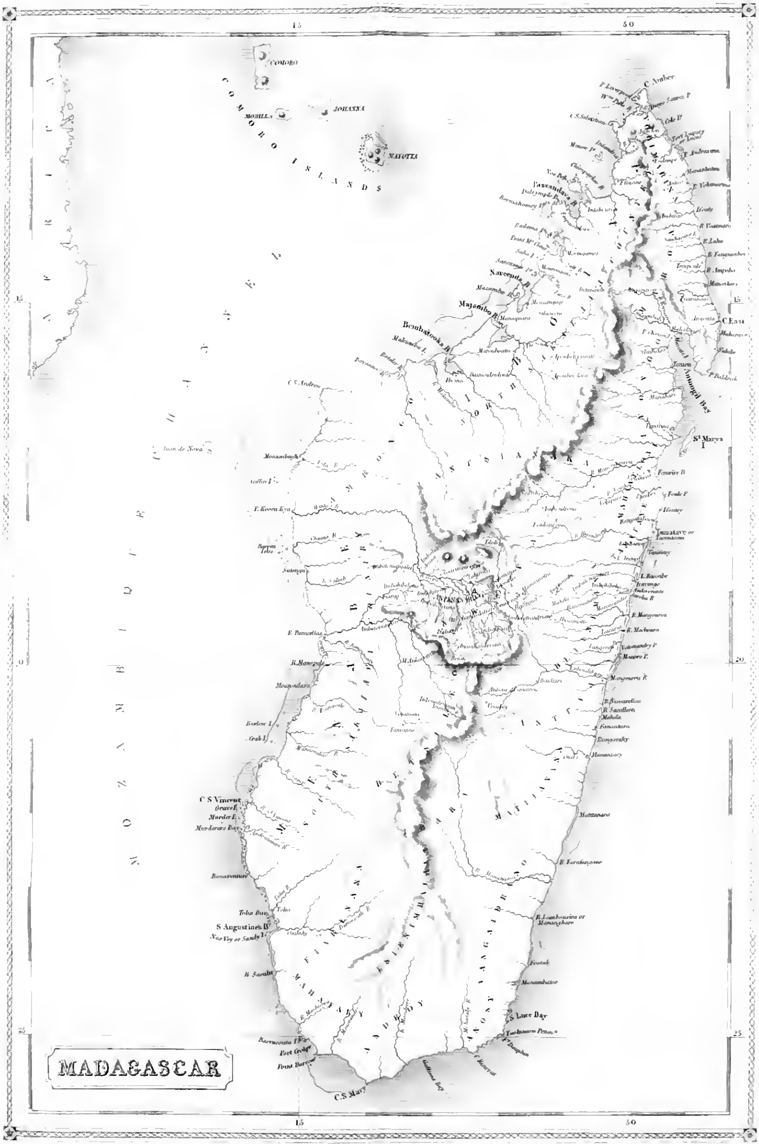
MADAGASCAR
COMORO ISLANDS
COMORO
MOHILLA
JOHANNA
MAYOTTA
AFRICA
MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL
Juan de Nova
C. Amber
C.S. Sebastian
Passandava B.
Narcenda B.
Majambo B.
Bembatooka B.
C.S. Andrew
C. East
Antongil Bay
St. Marys I.
ANTANANARIVO
Tamatave
ANTSIANAKA
NORTHS
R. Mangourou
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Bonaventure
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HISTORY OF MADAGASCAR.

CHAPTER I.

Geographical situation of Madagascar—Period of Discovery—Extent—Earliest visitors—Names by which the island is designated by the Natives—Import of Native Names—Description of the island by early visitors—Geological features of Madagascar—Minerals: copper, silver, iron, rock-salt, nitre, plumbago—General appearance of the country—Elevation of the principal mountains—Account of the appearance, structure, and peculiarities of the Ankaratra range of mountains—Number, situation, appearance, and extent of the lakes, rivers, springs, mineral waters—Description of the saline springs at Mandrovy, and the adjacent scenery in the Betsileo country.

MADAGASCAR, the Great Britain of Africa, and one of the largest islands in the world, is situated in the Indian, or Eastern Ocean, and is the principal island in the group usually designated the Ethiopian Archipelago. It is separated from the eastern coast of Africa by the Mozambique Channel, which is about 150 leagues across, though the nearest point of Madagascar, Cape Manambaho, is not more than 90 or 100 leagues from the opposite continent. East India ships, especially those bound to Bombay, frequently pass through the channel, and, when in want of provisions, usually resort to St. Augustine's Bay, which is on the south-eastern shore of the island, being situated in latitude 23° S. and long. 40° E. The distance between the

Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar, is about 600 leagues: from Mauritius it is 186 leagues distant; and from the Isle of Bourbon, 150.

From Cape Amber, or Ambro, its northern extremity, situated in lat. 25° 40′ S., Madagascar extends southward, about 900 miles, to Cape St. Mary, its southern point, which is in S. lat. 12° 2′. The breadth of the southern part of the island is about 300 miles; the northern portion is narrow, and it is widest in the centre, where it is about 400 miles broad. It has been estimated to contain two hundred millions of acres of land, but one hundred andfifty millions would probably be a more accurate computation.

Madagascar is said to have been discovered by Europeans in the year 1506; it was shortly afterwards visited by Tristan d'Acunha.

By the Portuguese it was called the island of St. Lawrence, either in honour of its discoverer, Lawrence Almeida, or, as stated by early writers, in accordance with a custom prevailing among them, in honour of the saint on whose day in the calendar it was first seen. The French, during the reign of Henry IV., called it Isle Dauphine.

The island had, however, for a long period previously, been known to the Moors and Arabs, who have visited its western shores for the purpose of trade. By them it was called Serandah, and not Serandib, as stated by Rochon, which there is every reason to believe was the name they gave to Ceylon.* The inhabitants of Europe had also been previously made acquainted with its existence by the accounts of Marco Paulo, whose travels were published in the close of the 13th century. By the last mentioned traveller the island was called *Magaster*.

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* See D'Herbelot's Bib. Orient.

The word *Madagascar* is of uncertain import; and its use, to designate the island, appears to be of foreign rather than native origin. The inhabitants appear to be acquainted with it only as the designation given by strangers to their country. The natives themselves have no distinct specific names for the whole of their island. By those who reside on the coast it is sometimes called *Nosindambo*, "island of wild hogs," from the number of these animals found in the country. In speaking of their country, the Madegasse usually name the several provinces respectively, or, if they have occasion to speak of the whole, some kind of periphrasis is employed, as, *Izao rehetra izao*, "All this entirely;" *Izao tontolo izao*, "this whole;" *Ni tany rehetra*, "all this country;" or, as expressions still more emphatic, *Izao ambany lanitra*, "this beneath the skies;" *Ambony tany ambany lanitra*, "upon the earth, and beneath the skies." A familiar expression for the whole island, is, also, *Ny, anivony ny riaka*, signifying, literally, "The, in the midst of the flood," "that which is surrounded by water," "island."* This name, however, though an appropriate term for "island," is applied by the natives to Madagascar only. The usual word for "island," in the native language, is, *nosy*, as, *Nosy Ibrahim*, "Isle of St. Mary."

The descriptions which different writers have given of Madagascar have been various, and, in many respects, dissimilar. In general, the representations of its productions, salubrity, and resources have been such as the hopes of its visitors have been led to desire, rather than such as their observations have fully authorized them to make. In the sixteenth century, the Dutch thus write: "The riches of this island are great, abounding in rice, honey, wax, cotton, lemons, cloves," &c. The French draw a far more splendid picture: M. de Modeve, in his Memoir respecting the island of Madagascar, remarks, "Les objets que l'on peut tirer de Madagascar sont variés à l'infini, cette île réunit les productions des deux zones; elle peut fournir abondamment au commerce de l'Asie et de l'Europe, le coton, la soie, les gommes, tous les raisins, l'ambre gris, l'ebenne, le bois de teinture, le chanvre, le lin, le meilleure fer, tous les metaux, même de l'or (!); on peut y fabriquer plus utilement que partout ailleurs, toutes les étoffes de l'Inde." The prize, as thus announced, certainly looks tempting, but it has never yet answered the eager expectations of adventurers.

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* *Tompony ny anivony ny riaka*, "sovereign of the island." This expression as descriptive of the extent of the sovereignty claimed by the late king Radama, was placed on his tomb.

Highly coloured as the above may appear, our own countrymen have shewn themselves equally capable of appreciating its excellencies, and exhibiting its beauties and its worth. Mr. Richard Boothby, a merchant of London, who visited Madagascar about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and published his account in 1644, after describing its soil, productions, &c., adds, "And, without all question, this country far transcends and exceeds all other countries in Asia, Africa, and America, planted by English, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish; and it is likely to prove of far greater value and esteem to any Christian prince and nation that shall plant and settle a sure habitation therein, than the West Indies are to the king and kingdom of Spain; and it may well be compared to the land of Canaan, that flows with milk and honey; a little world of itself, adjoining to no other land within the compass of many leagues or miles; or the chief paradise this day upon earth." In another place, after having again spoken of its resources, he adds, "In further commendation thereof, I will take the liberty of extolling it, I hope without offence, as Moses did the land of Canaan: 'It is a good land, a land in which rivers of waters and fountains spring out of the vallies and mountains: a land of wheat and barley, of vineyards, of fig-trees and pomegranates: a land wherein thou shalt eat without scarcity, neither shalt lack any thing therein: a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose mountains thou mayest dig brass.'" *

The geological features of the country are distinct and prominent; and although hitherto but very partially examined, present considerable variety. The greater part of the island exhibits primitive formations, chiefly granite, sienite, and blocks of exceedingly pure quartz; sometimes large pieces of beautifully-coloured rose-quartz are met with; the white kind is used by the natives to ornament the summits of their tombs; cyst, intersected by broad veins of quartz, and a substance resembling grey wacke or whinstone, is frequently seen. Many of the formations are of clay-slate; and a valuable kind of slate, suitable for roofing and writing upon, has been discovered in the Betsileo country, at about a hundred miles from the capital. Silex and chert, with beautiful formations of chalcedony, primitive limestone, including some valuable specimens of marble, with different kinds of sandstone, are also met with. Finely-crystallized schorls frequently occur in the Betsileo country, where, embedded in limestone, apparently of fresh-water formation, specimens of fossils, including serpents, lizards, cameleons, with different kinds of vegetable fossils, have been found.

No subterranean fires are known to be at present in active or visible operation; yet in some sections of the

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* Osborne's Voyages, Vol. ii. p. 634.

country, especially in the Betsileo province, indications of volcanic action frequently occur, and are strongly marked. Many of the rocks, for several miles together, are composed of homogeneous earthy lava; scoria and pumice are also occasionally discovered, and some of the lavas abound with finely-formed crystals of olivine.

Besides the primitive and transition formations, and the rocks of volcanic origin, there are large beds of clay, and extensive tracts of soil composed of ferruginous earth and disintegrated lava, rich alluvial deposits, and vegetable mould. Some of the geological specimens brought home to this country are evidently carbonaceous, and would favour the expectation that there are coal formations in some parts of the island. Limestone has not yet been discovered in the eastern part of Madagascar; but coral is abundant on the coast, and furnishes the inhabitants with excellent lime.

Our acquaintance with the minerals of Madagascar, though exceedingly limited and partial, is, as far as it extends, highly satisfactory. If the diamond, and other costly gems, have not yet been discovered in its mines, and if its bowels have not yielded the precious metal by which the new world inflamed the avarice of the inhabitants of the old, and doomed its own unoffending and aboriginal occupants, first, to a merciless bondage, and, finally, to annihilation; Madagascar is already proved to be rich in the minerals most useful to man. Silver and copper have been stated by early visitors to exist in certain portions of the island: the latter is frequently visible in specimens found in the country, and brought to England; and it is still reported by the natives that the former has been obtained. Mr. Boothby, indeed, refers to gold brought from this country: for after observing, "This gallant island of Madagascar affords these several rich commodities," which he enumerates, concluding with gold; he further states, "the old Earl of Denbigh brought home from this island of Madagascar, gold sand, which he presented to the king's majesty and the council-board; and I was at the council-board when this gold sand was in question, and approved of." Had this been correct, it is not likely that the circumstance would have been lost sight of, far more vigorous efforts would certainly have been made to discover this precious metal. The gold sand in question was, in all probability, brought from the adjacent coast of Africa. However this may be, iron ore, a mineral to a nation in the infancy of its civilization far more valuable than gold, has been found so rich and abundant as to be rendered available to the natives, by a rude and simple process of smelting, for almost every purpose for which it is at present required. A great part of the interior district of Ankova abounds with iron. Its quality is good, but the want of coal, which has hitherto been sought for in vain, renders the smelting of it difficult. In the district of Imamo, which lies to the west of the capital, great quantities of iron ore, in a very perfect state, are found on the surface of the ground: the portion of iron is so large in some ore, as perhaps to have occasioned the remark in Rochon, a remark which is certainly not warranted by facts, that native steel is found in Madagascar. The iron in the mountain of Ambohimiangavo is so abundant, that it is called by the natives, "iron-mountain."

Rock-salt is found near the coast, and nitre has been met with; and also, abundance of pyrites, yielding a valuable per centage of sulphur. The nitre appears like hoar-frost on the surface of embankments, and other projecting parts of the ground, and is called by the people, *sira tany*, salt of the earth: it is not, however, plentiful.

Under the superintendence of Mr. Cameron, one of the missionary artisans, measures were taken a few years ago, for obtaining, by artificial means, a larger supply of this useful article. Oxide of manganese has been found about fifty miles south-west of the capital. A substance resembling plumbago, or black lead, is found in great abundance in some parts of the island, and is used by the natives to colour, and polish, or glaze many of their rude articles of domestic use. Several kinds of ochre, or coloured earth, have been found,* some of which are used in colouring the outsides of buildings, &c.

The country next the shore, with the exception of the south-eastern coast in the neighbourhood of Fort Dauphin, is flat and exceedingly low. Some parts are apparently below the level of the ocean, and, consequently, marshy and incapable of culture. This margin of comparatively level soil, consisting of rich meadow-land, or rice-grounds, extends on the eastern coast from ten to fifty miles in breadth; on the western side of the island it is from fifty to one hundred wide, and occasionally extends still farther towards the interior. In some parts of the eastern coast, the country becomes suddenly mountainous at the distance of about thirty miles from the sea. Within the level border, the whole country, with the exception of part of the Betsileo and Sakalava districts, is diversified with hills of varied elevations, and extending in every direction.

In some parts of the island, immense plains stretch, in comparatively cheerless solitude, over a wide extent of country; and at distant points, in varied directions, a small spot is all that appears under cultivation. Thus, for

* The Rev. J. J. Freeman has recently brought to this country a valuable collection of the minerals, &c. of Madagascar, specimens of which are deposited in the Missionary Museum, Blomfield-street, Finsbury.

example, in travelling from the centre of the island westward, after leaving the inhabited parts of Ankova, about a week's journey must be performed through a desert, before reaching any villages in the adjoining districts of the Sakalavas. The surface of the country is in general considerably diversified, and presents the usual characteristics of primitive, secondary, volcanic, and the other formations associated with these, in different parts of the globe. In this respect the island exhibits a greater resemblance to many portions of South America, or India, than to any equal section of the adjacent continent of Africa. The outlines of its varied features are, however, less bold and stupendous than those of America, and inferior in dimensions to those of the Asiatic or African continents. Many parts, especially on the eastern, northern, and southern borders, may be appropriately denominated mountainous; but the altitude of the highest mountains is greatly below that of several in islands of less extended boundary in other parts of the torrid zone. The broad extent of table-land in the interior is itself considerably elevated; and from it, Ankaratra and other mountains rise, yet the highest are probably not more than 8,000 or 12,000 feet above the level of the sea. Few exact measurements have yet been taken, but from observations made by a common level, and from the direction of the rivers, there is reason to conclude that the highest mountains in the island are, Angavo, near Ambatomanga, in Imerina, and Ankaratra, the south-west boundary of Ankova, Andringitra in Imerina, and N.N.W. from Tananarivo and Iangogora, called also Vigarora, in the northern extremity of the island. The first three of these rise to the greatest elevation above the level of the sea, the last is the highest from the base to the summit. By some, the chain, or range of mountains, called Ankaratra, and situated to the south of the capital, is supposed to be the highest, and is said to cause, for a distance of thirty miles on its eastern side, an artificial twilight, of ten minutes or a quarter of an hour's duration.

The following account of the appearance of the Ankaratra mountains, and of the country in their immediate neighbourhood, is given by Mr. James Cameron, an intelligent and scientific artisan, who was for many years connected with the mission at the capital of Madagascar.

"Southward of Imerina, there is an elevated cluster or range of mountains, called Ankaratra: they are not higher than the hills in Imerina, but the ground whence they rise is high, so that at a distance they appear like the highest range of an exceedingly elevated chain of mountains. The face of the country continues to rise in a southern direction for a distance of probably forty miles, after which the ascent becomes more steep for the next ten miles. On this elevated ground is situated a chain of hills, called Vava vato, or Stone Mouth. This is still a continuation of the same chain as Ankaratra, but is the most rugged of any in the country. To the south of this ridge spreads the lower, though still hilly country of Betsileo; and to the west, the district of Mandridrano.

"The summits of Ankaratra are generally basalt in various stages of decomposition, many of them hard and solid within, while the external surface is soft and earthy, and evidently losing a portion every year, from the action of the atmosphere, rains, &c. Several of the smaller hills also, in this place, approach more to the sugar-loaf form—in these, granite predominates. It is on the north side of this range that the iron pyrites are found, from which sulphur is extracted at Tananarivo.

"In travelling a distance of about thirty miles along the north-west side of this range, I do not recollect seeing a single piece of any other stone than that above described. But there is a place called Kiotrakiotra, where, for a few miles, huge masses of granite, and small fragments of quartz, indicate a change in the nature of the rock. Some little account of this place, which I wrote on the evening of the day we passed it, may not be unacceptable.

"Many large stones appeared standing out of the ground. One that we saw projected horizontally to the distance of twenty-five feet, forming a kind of cave underneath, where travellers are accustomed to lodge.

"The neighbourhood of this cave formed one of the most romantic and picturesque scenes we had yet seen. It consisted of a deep, narrow vale, in many places not less than 500 feet deep, with a considerable stream at the bottom: the rivulet meandering sometimes through the narrow bottom of the vale, and at other times almost lost among the beautiful green shrubs, which clothed its banks, and were the resort of several kinds of birds, apparently little disturbed by our intrusion. Wherever the water presented any extent of surface, numerous waterfowl sported in comparative tameness on its surface.

"In the neighbourhood of the cave, the change in the scenery became more romantic and bold. Masses of rock, some of them from thirty to fifty feet long, projected from the side of the ravine, like rudely-shaped pillars, and on the top of these rested other masses of rock, sometimes projecting so as to threaten destruction to all below.

"Between the masses of rock, thus strewn in wildest confusion on every hand, many kinds of shrubs were growing with greater luxuriance than any we had hitherto seen in our journey. The rivulet, which formerly flowed in a serpentine course from one side of the ravine to the other, now disappeared, and forced its way by a subterranean passage for at least a quarter of a mile.

"Fragments of rock thrown together in several places, formed a frightful bridge over the stream. Many of those masses were more than 100 feet in length, and generally presented a globular, or rather oval-shaped form. Some, again, presented massy sides and rather obtuse peaks, towering from the sides of the valley. Beneath and between these blocks of granite were extensive caverns, occasionally twelve or sixteen feet in breadth, connected by passages in some places so narrow as scarcely to allow a person to pass between them. These caverns received light through apertures between the stones by which they were formed, but in some places they were so dark and deep as almost to forbid the approach of those who were desirous of exploring them. We penetrated their gloom for a distance of nearly two hundred yards, and might have gone much farther had time and strength permitted. The river, during the dry season, seemed to find a way considerably lower than the bottom of the caverns, for we neither saw nor heard any thing of it. But in the rainy season, that passage must be too small for the waters of the swollen stream: they must then rush with fearful violence through the passages we were now exploring. During that season, when generally the stream both above and below is impassable, the projecting masses of rock are used as bridges by the natives, and afford means of communication between the opposite sides of the valley, more safe and easy than any other they could devise for crossing the torrents.

"On looking at those hills called Vava vato from the north, at a distance of ten or fifteen miles, they present a most rugged and irregular aspect, resembling an assemblage of ruins. On approaching nearer, they appear to be granite, having almost all their summits, in many places their sides also, and the valleys between them, covered with enormous blocks of stone; many stones in an upright position being from forty to sixty feet high; and some on the higher hills, which at a distance appeared like towers, seemed more than a hundred feet in perpendicular elevation. The strata of a considerable portion of the rock were large, and ranged in a position nearly perpendicular, apparently granite or gneiss. Some of it was beautiful in appearance, and certainly would be highly serviceable for many of the purposes of civilized life.

"We crossed this chain of hills at two different places, eight or ten miles distant from each other. The width across is ten or twelve miles; the romantic scenery of this highland region was agreeably enlivened by streams of very pure water, which wound their sparkling course through most of the ravines and valleys of the pass. In one of the hills there is said to be a cavern sufficiently capacious to contain a large number of men. The whole neighbourhood is stated to be infested with banditti, or robbers, so that travellers generally go in small companies. We saw several birds of the falcon kind among the rocks, but no quadrupeds.

There does not appear to be any chain of mountains extending north and south through the island. Those represented in maps, and designated Ambohitsmena, signifying "at the red villages," are probably the Vohidrazana, forming part of the forest of Alamazaraotra, and the highest section of forest west of Betanimena. Ambohitsmena is a name unknown in the island, and has probably been given by Europeans visiting and describing the eastern parts of the island. But though no continuous chain of mountains stretches from one end of the island to the other, the traveller cannot pass from any one point on the coast to a section on the opposite shore, without crossing a number of mountains of greater or less elevation.

The highland scenery of Madagascar, in the central portions of the island, is diversified by lakes of various extent and form; they are also met with in some parts of the low alluvial countries nearer the sea. Some of these lakes are remarkable for their natural beauty, others are esteemed for their utility: many of them are large. Among the most considerable are Ihotry, situated to the north of Fiarenana, Imanangora in Antsianaka, Safé in Ambongo, Imania in the Sakalava country, being about one hundred miles in length, though not more than a mile wide. To these may be added Saririaka, (an expressive name, signifying "image of the ocean,") which lies to the east of the forest of Bemarana; Anosivé, to the south of Tamatave; Ivavongy, in Betanimena; and Itasy, in Imerina, famous for its fish. The highly bituminous lake near the river Mangafiafy, is in the province of Anosy: this remarkable lake is about five miles in breadth, and extends in length about sixty miles. In the interior of the same province there is another lake, whose waters taste as if strongly impregnated with copper. Excellent fish is found in the greater number of the lakes, of which there are several others, but the most valuable are those already named.

On the eastern coast of the island, a series of lakes extends for a distance of 200 miles. Several of these are remarkably beautiful, being spotted with islets of various dimensions, some of them clothed with verdure, others enlivened with the habitations of men. The annexed account of the voyage by the lakes, near the eastern shore, proceeding from the coast to the capital, describes their extent, dimensions, and other peculiarities, which may be regarded as illustrating a general notice of the lakes in Madagascar. The water of some of the lakes is fresh; of others, brackish; and of others, decidedly salt.

The traveller proceeding from Tamatave to the capital, reaches the first lake at Hivondrona. This lake is called *Nosi-vé,* which signifies "many large islands," from the circumstance of there being several in the lake. Proceeding southward, it assumes two other names in succession. At its widest part, it is called *Sarobakina,* "difficult to cross," which is peculiarly appropriate, especially in rainy, stormy, or otherwise unfavourable weather. Farther on, it is called "*Si-ănak angaitra,* "the place of rofia plants." The whole length of this lake to Tāny-fotsy, may be twenty-two or twenty-three miles, having about six villages on each bank.

At Tāny-fotsy (i. e. white soil) the traveller pitches his tent: and the natives must carry the canoes and packages across the bank to the adjoining lake, a distance of about a quarter of a mile. A junction has been commenced between the two lakes. Radama paid particular attention to this object; and under the superintendence of Rateffe and Filibert, about eighteen hundred men were for some time employed in cutting a channel, and removing the soil. Since the decease of Radama, the labours have been suspended; and this work, as well as many others of great national importance, remains unfinished.

South of Tāny-fotsy, is the small lake *Famonoampaninana,* "killing of serpents." This extends about half a mile in length when a shallow stream commences, called Ampanirana. The next lake, Ampāndran-ēty, though wide at its entrance, gradually becomes narrow, and is succeeded by *Atopìana,* "cast," or "thrown," from a custom the natives have of throwing a stone or stick in a certain part of it as they pass by, in memory of some fabled event of olden time. The next is one of the most extensive and beautiful in the whole series of lakes; it is called Irangy. In some places it is narrow; in others, the width is considerable, and crossing it is difficult, from the extremely rude canoes of the natives, and the numbers of crocodiles with which its waters are infested. Atakalămpona is generally selected as a resting-place. This village, which is built on an insulated bank, contains forty or fifty houses; and nearly opposite is Ambaribé, an excellent fishing village.

Irangy becomes very shallow towards its termination, where a bank called Fantomaizina, and covered with trees, separates it from the adjoining lake Antoby. The bank is about half a mile across. A narrow stream, called Andranopandrana, where there is scarcely water enough at times to float the canoes, runs out of Antoby. The next is the broad lake Andrăsoamasay. Here M. Morillion, a trader from Mauritius, who settled at Tananarivo in 1821, was unfortunately drowned in 1825. His body was found, and buried in the bank by the natives. It was afterwards burrowed up, and partly devoured, by crocodiles. The natives again got possession of it, wrapped it in cloths, and placed it in a tree, beyond the reach of these formidable animals, and having communicated the circumstance to the friends of the deceased at the capital, his remains were conveyed thither, and interred in the missionary or European burial-ground.

Andrăsoamasay joins Andrasoa-bé, which is the finest and noblest of the lakes, being from four to six miles in width, and eight or ten in length, having its borders enriched and adorned by luxuriant vegetation. At the southern extremity of Andraso-abé is the small village of Ivavongy, where an old chieftain has been long found exceedingly kind and hospitable; he is a man of large corporeal dimensions—smaller intellectual powers—the husband of four wives—the father of a numerous race—mild in disposition—but extremely fond of one of the greatest sources of evil to his country, ardent spirits.

Near this spot a circumstance lately occurred which the natives consider as decisive in establishing the power of the charms of their wise men. An European trader from the capital was conducting a number of cattle down to the coast for exportation: the natives advised him to try the effect of their "ody," or charms, for the protection of his bullocks in crossing the lake. Deeming hismelf above all necessity for attention to their superstitions, he disregarded their advice, and sent forward the animals. He soon saw and repented of his error: for nine of his bullocks were almost instantly seized by the crocodiles, and drawn under the water; fearing the loss of the whole, he hastily desired the "charms" to be prepared, exclaiming, "I shall lose all—work the ody—bring the charm." To his astonishment, and the triumph of the natives, when the charm was worked, the rest of the cattle crossed in safety; and even those which had disappeared, were in a moment, as if some invisible agency had dissolved the spell, released, and, recovering their position, passed over to the opposite shore.

On the return of the trader to Tananarivo, he related the circumstance, and expressed his belief in the power of the Malagasy charms. Being questioned as to the mode in which the "ody" was worked, the mystery vanished. The charm consisted in noise. The charmers shouted, beat the water with branches of trees, both in the canoes and on both sides of the lake, and thus frightened the crocodiles, who were unmercifully dragging his oxen to the deep parts of the lake. The crocodile is known to be timid; and if resisted by the human species, seeks safety in retreat.

On the bank of the long and narrow lake Imōasa, the next at which the traveller arrives, stands the small village of Ambīla. The waters are here brackish, from the junction between the lake and the sea. The natives are in the habit, in most places, when the wind is gentle and steady, of raising sail, by means of their lambas tied to a pole, and feel not a little mortified, should the traveller, distrusting their "skill in sailing," object to this mode of saving their labour, and expediting the voyage.

The lake Imōasa terminates at an isthmus, or bank, called *Andavaka menarana*, "the hole of serpents," from the number of these reptiles said to have been found there. This is the widest bank between the lakes. It extends about three-quarters of a mile: a pleasant and spacious path leads through a thick wood to the next stream, *Ranomainty*, i. e. black-water; a name correctly bestowed from the appearance of the water. The stream is narrow and serpentine, scarcely affording space sufficient for a canoe to pass. The canoe, if pushed with too much force, strikes against the winding bank, and is certainly upset. The stream afterwards becomes wider, and is from 100 to 300 feet across, but still difficult to navigate, on account of the quantity of fallen timber strewn in its waters. The scenery is inexpressibly charming, and well compensates the lover of the picturesque and beautiful in nature for the inconveniences sustained.

Ranomainty joins the Iharoka, the largest river in Betanimena, which falls into the sea to the south of Andevoranto, a large village, containing from 200 to 300 houses, and having about 1200 inhabitants. The houses resemble, in structure, those of Tamatave. The village is a mart for rice, cattle, and fish. Some Arab traders reside here purchasing rice from the interior, and forwarding it down to the coast. On the banks of the Ihāroka are several villages; the chief are Maromandia, Ambohibohazo, Mahatsāra, and, at a short distance from these, is Vohitsara. The appearance of the country on the banks of the river, is remarkably rich and beautiful, exhibiting all the variety and loveliness of nature in its most pleasing and attractive forms; and to the eye accustomed to European scenery, it would vie with some of the fairest regions, were its gently-rising grounds, sheltered groves, or spreading lawns, enlivened by structures, the abodes of intelligence, refinement, and comfort, with temples sacred to Him who hath weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.

From the Ihāroka, the traveller turns westward into a narrow, serpentine, and deep river, called Alavēnonana, which extends about four miles, where he reaches the village of Vohitsara. This river is embosomed by rich and valuable plantations belonging to the natives, and appropriated to the culture of rice, plantains, gourds, sugar-cane, &c. The village contains from 100 to 150 houses, and being situated on an eminence, affords a charming view of the varied, extensive, and beautiful scenery of the surrounding country.

Though some portions of Madagascar, and considerable parts of the district of Ankova in particular, are arid as well as barren, the country in general is well watered.

The most fertile spots in the island are the valleys. Most of these abound with rice, the staple food of the natives,* and a few other vegetables. These valleys are, especially in the rainy season, clothed with a rich and luxuriant verdure, delightfully exhilarating amidst the sterility and wildness of the surrounding regions. The most extensive valleys in the island are Belisa in the Sakalava country, and Ambolo in Anosy.

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* Excepting, perhaps, the Sakalavas, of Menabe, whose principal food is arrow-root.

The rivers of Madagascar are numerous; and many of them of considerable width, the greater number flowing into the sea on the western coast; thus the Sambaho, which passes through Ambongo, and falls into the sea south of Cape St. Andrew, called by the Malagasy, Jantsanira; the Betsiboka, which passes through Iboina, and falls into the sea not far from Mojanga. It is this river which the Ikiopa joins at Marovoy,* (a military post,) where the Ikiopa loses its own name in the united course of the Betsiboka. The Ikiopa rises south of Angavo, and waters the whole neighbourhood of the capital, Tananarivo. The Mansiatra is also an extensive river on the west, falling into the sea at a bay of the same name, north of Morondava. The Matitanana is one of the largest rivers on the eastern coast, and for its sanctity may be regarded as the Ganges of Madagascar.† The origin of the name of this river is fabulous: *Maty* signifies "to die," "dead;" *tanana*, "the hand." It is said, two giants of extraordinary stature were disputing, one standing on each side of the river; during the dreadful contest, one seized the hand of the other with such a giant-grasp as actually wrenched it off. It fell into the river, and gave it the commemorative name of Maty-tanana, "the dead hand." There are also other rivers, but all less favourable for the purposes of trade and commerce, than from their magnitude a traveller might, on first seeing them, be induced to expect. At their junction with the sea, most of the rivers are choked by sand; in some instances, the same river forms frequent cascades and falls, in its course towards the ocean; and in other places, the descent is extremely rapid, and its current strong as a torrent, rendering navigation dangerous if not impracticable.

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* Signifying many alligators.

† Some farther notice of this river, the banks of which are the chief seats of Mohammedanism in the island, will be found in a subsequent portion of the work.

The gloomy and unbroken solitude of some parts of the sublime mountain-scenery of Madagascar, is enlivened by cataracts of varied size, form, and elevation. The principal cataracts or water-falls in the island are Talaviana in the district of Tamatave. Farahantsana, about thirty miles west of Tananarivo, in the district of Marovatana; Ifito, about half a day's journey from Hivondrona; Iandrianavomby, in Betanimena; and Moavana, in Mahavelona.

Fountains, or springs, are numerous and valuable, especially in the more elevated parts of the island. The capital is supplied with water from the *rano-velona*, "perennial springs," which abound in the mountain on which it stands, or in the low grounds in its immediate vicinity. Some of these natural fountains are extremely good, and afford an ample supply of water for all domestic purposes: others are brackish, and consequently less serviceable.

These are not the only kind of valuable fountains to be met with in Madagascar. Mineral waters have been found; and a more perfect knowledge of the country would probably make us acquainted with a greater number than have yet been discovered. Medicinal springs, as might be expected, occur in those parts of the country, the external form of which is evidently the effect of volcanic agency. Thermæ, or warm-springs, occasionally appear; among which may be mentioned those in the fertile and beautiful province of Anosy. which are reported to possess valuable medicinal properties, and others near the small and charming village of *Ambohizanahàry*, "Village of God." It has been supposed to have taken its name from some thermæ, or warm-springs, found about half a mile north-east of the village, and which the natives have regarded as sacred, or in some way indicative of the divine power.

These springs are called *Ràno-mafana*, or "warm waters." The spots in which the springs issue from the soil, are deeply shaded by a large quantity of closely-woven over-hanging bamboos, and the wild-fig, whose branches shoot directly across the stream, and by sending forth innumerable small fibres, which descend and fasten themselves in the soil beneath, resemble, in miniature, the banian-tree of India, of which species the wild-fig of Madagascar is probably a variety. The immediate cavity whence the waters issue, at one of the principal springs is an irregular hollow of about two feet width, and twelve or fourteen inches in depth; from this source it flows in a shallow stream till it meets a river at a short distance, called also Rano-mafana, which winds its way between the springs and the village of Ambohizanahary. The smell and taste of the springs are highly sulphureous. The average heat is somewhat below boiling point. The natives make no use of the springs, but merely regard them as objects of curiosity. There are warm-springs also in the Betsileo country, and many indications of former volcanic action in their immediate vicinity, whereas no indications of this kind are found in the locality now under consideration.

The following account of a visit to the saline springs at Mandrovy, in the Betsileo country, is given by Mr. Cameron, by whom they were visited in 1834:—

"When we arrived at the first village in Betsileo, we inquired of our host if there were any natural curiosities in the neighbourhood. He soon mentioned a place where he described the ground as overspread with salt, and the springs as having a saltish taste. On the following morning we visited the spot, and found, within a space of forty or fifty yards, several springs, the united waters of which might produce five or six gallons per minute. The water had an agreeably acidulous taste, apparently highly impregnated with carbonic acid gas, which speedily separated from the water, adhering in small globules to the sides of the glass with which we took up some of the water. The same gas appeared rising in globules from all the springs.

Where the ground was damp it was covered with an efflorescence, as were also the stones which were moistened by the stream as it flowed from the springs into an adjoining brook.

"The people of the neighbourhood informed us that they drive their cattle to the place to drink the water and lick up the salt, which they say has a remarkable tendency to promote their fattening for slaughter; but we could not learn that the people themselves used, for any purpose whatever, either the water of the spring, or the salt. The cattle, daily driven to the spot, had gradually worn away much of the earth, and exposed several masses of granite, and also a thin layer of limestone, six or eight inches thick, which in some places presented the appearance of marble. The layer, however, did not consist of calcareous matter alone, but had embedded or enclosed within it pieces of basalt, quartz, and, apparently, feldspar, all of which extraneous substances seemed to have been subjected to considerable friction, for they were round and smooth, like the stones found in rapidly-flowing rivers. There were also many pieces of decayed wood enclosed in the limestone, some as thick as a man's finger, others of a smaller size. We found also some varieties of fossils in the mass. One fragment of stone contained the impression of a serpent: the part of the body which lay uppermost seemed to have been crushed, as the lower part only was distinctly marked.

"When a thermometer was immersed in the adjacent stream, it stood at 66°; when in the spring, it stood at 80°. The specific gravity of the water rather exceeded that of common water, being in the proportion of 1000 to 1004. When a little water was added to it, a white precipitate was immediately formed: the same effect was produced when nitrate of barytes was added. When nitrate of silver was added, a white precipitate was produced, which first turned brownish, and soon afterwards assumed a black appearance. The water decomposed soap.

"At a place about seven miles distant, near the western extremity of a succession of volcanic hills, six or eight miles in extent, there is a spring rising among a mass of volcanic rocks, in which the thermometer rose to 138°. The water, however, did not seem to possess any strongly-marked saline or other properties.

"About seven miles to the east of the region in which the last spring was seen, we came to a well which was described to us as possessing the following marvellous properties:—In appearance, it was said always to resemble boiling water, while it was at the same time perfectly cold; and if any one attempted to bathe, it was said he would faint on going into the water. On reaching the well, it presented the appearance of a large cauldron beginning to boil; and we had no doubt but that the latter part of the report was correct, as the surface of the water was about three feet below the ground at the edge of the well, instead of flowing over its side. The water seemed to find an outlet by a covered passage, as, at a considerable distance from the well, we heard a rumbling noise under ground, resembling that which would be produced by the bubbling of gas through water. The boiling appearance arose from the discharge of large quantities of carbonic acid gas, which constantly escaped from the water. This gas, from its superior density to common air, would certainly, at least in a quiet day, lie in the cavity of the well, and produce fainting in those who entered the water. I showed the effects of carbonic-acid gas upon a grasshopper, which enabled some of the natives who accompanied us to understand the cause of those effects which they had described.

"At a distance of about a mile and a half, we visited another spring, or rather an assemblage of springs, rising off a bed of limestone. These springs also emitted great quantities of carbonic acid gas. One spring, in particular, discharged it in such abundance as to produce a noise which might be heard at the distance of several yards. The strata in this locality appeared to be limestone; and in some places there were extensive caves, from the inside of the roofs of which beautiful stalactitic formations were suspended. What appeared to us remarkable was the great quantities of salt which was found in a state of efflorescence on these rocks, and also on the damp ground in the neighbourhood. The natives of this part of the country also drive their cattle to the place, to lick the salt. Here, also, instead of planting rice, or grain, or roots, for food, as is usual in other places, the natives plant a kind of flag, of rapid growth, which imbibes a large portion of the saline properties of the soil on which it grows. This rush they cut several times in the year, burn it, and from the ashes extract a salt, which they pack up in baskets of rush or grass, sell in their markets, or send to the capital. From the manufacture of salt of very inferior quality, by the above simple process, the people of this neighbourhood are said to be comparatively rich. The salt formed on the ground was a remarkably pure carbonate of soda, which we used afterwards in the manufacture of soap in Tananarivo."

Salt is an article in considerable demand at the capital and other thickly-populated parts of the country; and as the demand has been such as to induce the natives to cultivate the rush above referred to, for the sake of obtaining a supply, it seems remarkable that they have never used the superior kind of salt furnished by the laboratory of nature in this part of the country. The probability is, they have been deterred by considerations more or less connected with their superstitions.

CHAP II.

Climate of Madagascar—Fluctuations in the temperature of the atmosphere—Insalubrity of the greater part of the sea-coast—Healthiness of the interior—The Malagasy year—Periodical rains—Number and names of the months—The seasons of the Malagasy year; import of their designations—Thunder and lightning—Water-spouts—Whirlwinds—Meteors—Variety and fertility of the soil—Productions—Forests—Trees and plants, indigenous and exotic—Honey and gums—Birds, native and foreign—Fable of the birds choosing a king—Wild and tame quadrupeds—Fishes; efforts to obtain a supply for the capital—Amphibious animals—Account of the crocodiles; peculiar habits of the animal—Sagacity of the dog—Fable of the serpent, the crocodile, and the dog—Superstition of the natives respecting the crocodile—Insects and reptiles.

The climate of Madagascar is exceedingly diversified, both in the range of its temperature, and the degrees of its salubrity. The heat, in the low lands and on the coast, is often intense; but in the interior and elevated parts of the country, it is mild, the thermometer seldom rising above 85°. In the different sections, every variety of temperature may be met with, from the comparatively oppressive heat of the coast, to the cold of the lofty Ankaratra range, on the summit of which, ice may often be found; or the elevated regions in the northern part of the island, where showers of sleet are frequently seen.

The temperature of the province of Ankova, in which the capital is situated, is agreeable to a European, the greatest heat being about 85°, and the lowest 40°; and though during the chief part of the day, viz. from nine in the morning to four in the afternoon, it is often sultry, the mornings and evenings are always pleasant. In the winter months, or from May to October, when the ground is occasionally covered with hoar-frost, the thermometer frequently does not rise above 44° for several days in succession. At other seasons, the fluctuations in the heat of the atmosphere are extreme and sudden. Often in the morning the thermometer is at 40°, or even at 38°, and rises to 75° or 80° between two and three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day. The difference in the temperature, however, is much less than that which is experienced in the salubrity of the climate in different portions of Madagascar. The inhospitality of the whole coast, with but few exceptions, is extremely prejudicial to health, and affects the natives not born in those parts, and foreigners, in nearly an equal degree.

The miasma pervading the atmosphere over the greater part of the coast, during the whole of the summer months, has proved so fatal to the colonists or settlers from France, who have at different times attempted to establish themselves in the country, and to the Dutch, who have visited it for traffic, as to render the not inappropriate designation of the Isle of St. Mary's, "the grave of the French," "the churchyard" or "dead island" of the Dutch, applicable to the coast of the greater part of the island.

The malaria which engenders the destructive fever, is supposed to arise from the decomposition of vegetable substances in contact with stagnant water. The mouths of many of the rivers are choked up with sand, so that their waters either pass sluggishly into the sea, or, when not swollen by rains falling in the interior, present the aspect of a broad, unruffled, stagnant lake, for several miles inland. The brackishness of the water, and the absence of crocodiles, often indicate a level below that of the waters of the sea, while much of the ground on the inland side of the bank of sand that is raised along the border of the sea, being below the level of the ocean, extensive morasses occur in several parts of the coast. Many of the lakes are also shallow, and receive large quantities of vegetable matter, furnished in all the rank luxuriance which the heat and humidity of the climate unite to produce; and some of these sheets of water, from the trees and shrubs that grow around, and rise in different parts of their surface, bear a greater resemblance to insulated forests than ordinary lakes.

The effluvia arising from the lakes and swamps near the coast, is extremely prejudicial to health; and by incautious exposure to this, either early in the morning or late in the evening, the fatal seeds of the Malagasy fever may be so deeply received into the human constitution as never to be eradicated. In the central parts of the island, and in Ankova, said to be the most salubrious province in Madagascar, the fever does not exist, though here, occasionally, persons who have been affected on the coast, fall victims under a relapse.

The great elevation of the province of Ankova, perhaps five or six thousand feet above the level of the sea, the absence of forests, the general dryness of the soil, the partial extent to which luxuriant vegetation is spontaneous, and the cultivation of many of the marshy parts of the soil, will be sufficient to account for its salubrity. The weather on the coast is generally hot and damp, or rainy; but in the interior the rains are periodical, and, in a great measure, regulate the divisions or seasons of the year.

The Malagasy year commences at the capital with an annual feast, called the Fandroana. The festival, of which an account will be given in a subsequent part of the work, commences about ten or eleven days in each year earlier than in the preceding year; consequently, a complete revolution takes place about every thirty-third year. The circulation of this festival is often the only means that the inhabitants have of ascertaining their age; and as there are some who are said to be able to recollect the Fandroana occurring precisely at the same period, three successive times, they must be upwards of one hundred years of age.

The months are lunar, but with an additional day, called the Vintana, or Fortune, to be afterwards explained. There are four seasons, called the *Lohataona*, or "head of the season;" from *loha*, "head," and *taona*, "season," or "year." *Fahavaratra*, "the causing or introducing rain," or summer; from *faha*, "to cause," and *varatra*, "thunderbolt." *Fararano*, "end of water," or rain; from *fara*, "end," and *rano*, "water," or rain; and *Ririnano*, "winter." These seasons neither commence nor close at the same period in successive years, as their duration is not fixed by any month, or day of the month: their length depends on the weather, or rain. Spring, in one year, may commence much earlier than in another; and the rainy season may last much longer in one year than in another. The seasons, as their names imply, are not regulated by any specific number of moons, but depend on certain states of the weather. The Lohataona, head of the year, or spring, commences with the budding of the trees, whether that take place earlier or later in the year. Fahavaratra, the causing of the thunder, begins when heavy showers of rain fall, accompanied usually by thunder and lightning. Fararano, (end of rain) includes the whole season of cutting and gathering in the rice, which, with some, commences before the Fahavaratra has strictly ceased, and may not, in some cases, terminate with others till the Ririnano is far advanced. Ririnano, the name given to the winter season, is highly expressive; it is a passive participle, from the neuter verb *mariry*, the root of which is *riry*, "all cleaned off," nothing growing, or found verdant."* On an average, the

Lohataona lasts . .	one month and a half.
Fahavaratra	five months.
Fararano	one month and a half.
Ririnano	five months.

making a total of thirteen lunar months. The Malagasy year, however, contains but twelve months; and those making a total of about 354 days. Ten parts out of the 354 days are taken up with the summer and winter seasons, during five of which the rain falls almost every day, and during the other five scarcely any. Of the remaining three parts, one and a half, or about six weeks, precedes the rain, and is the time of planting the rice, &c.; the other half, an equal period of about six weeks, following the heavy rains, forms the autumnal season, and is succeeded by the dry and cold weather.

The rain, during its season, usually commences every day at from two to four or six o'clock in the afternoon, and conti-

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[*] Hence the expressions, *Mariry ny zavatra*, "the things are all cleaned off—property all gone;" *Mariry ny tany*, "the country is swept of people, cattle, produce, &c.," as after a desolating war; *Mariry ny loha*, "the head is cleaned off;" as when the head is shaved.

nues for a few hours; sometimes it lasts through the night. It is generally accompanied with heavy thunder, and much lightning; and in some seasons, the thunder and lightning continue during the whole of the Fahavaratra. The season is generally introduced by the lightning playing in an evening, perhaps a month before the rains actually commence. It has been remarked also, that a few showers of heavy rain fall about three or four weeks before this season commences; the weather again clears off, and in about a month, or less, the regular diurnal rains set in. The rain is occasionally mingled with hail; and showers of hailstones, at times as large as walnuts, or pigeons' eggs, have proved, at this season of the year, extremely injurious to vegetation: snow is never mixed with the hail, or seen alone, even among the summits of the loftiest mountains, where the fogs are dense and cold, and the sleet often heavy and continued. A charm called the *ody-varatra*, "thunderbolt charm," is generally used at such seasons by the natives, but, as may be supposed, with far less effect than their fears induce them to desire.

The trade-winds prevail during the greater part of the year, and blow from the east, or south-east; but the rains are often accompanied by high winds from the west, occasionally north-west, and not unfrequently from the south-west.

The *Rambondanitra*, "tail of heaven," i. e. waterspout, and *Tadio*, "twist," i. e. whirlwind, are not uncommon in Madagascar, and often exceedingly destructive both to houses and plantations, even in the interior of the island. Houses are also at times struck by the electric fluid; and scarcely a season passes without the loss of several lives from the same cause: this is from the forked lightning; that which is seen almost constantly of an evening in warm weather, playing in the horizon, is not forked; and being perfectly innocuous, forms one of the most beautiful and splendid phenomena in nature, to be witnessed in Madagascar.

Meteors are occasionally seen, and earthquakes are not unknown. Besides the effects of these convulsions of nature, as experienced in some of the villages, the capital itself has been shaken by an earthquake within the last twenty years, viz. since the Missionaries arrived there. Among the accounts of remarkable events preserved by an intelligent native, is the record of an occurrence of this kind which took place on the 21st of Alahamady, that is, about the end of March, 1829, when a piece of ground, or large portion of the surface of the earth, situated to the east of Antananirivo, was removed to a considerable distance from its former position.

The soil in many parts of Madagascar, especially in several of the beautiful and extensive valleys of the island, may justly be denominated fertile. Large portions of the table-land of the interior, and of the mountainous part of the island, are, however, rocky and sterile, and much of the low land near the coast appears little better than a pestilential swamp, or unwholesome morass, while the border extending to the sea is often sandy and barren. The soil of many parts is nevertheless mellow, prolific, and susceptible, in a high degree, of cultivation; while it appears sufficient to yield the means of support for a vastly larger population than the island at present contains, or is likely to contain for many generations to come. From the varieties of soil which the different sections of the country exhibit, it seems eminently adapted not only to yield a far greater abundance of the articles at present cultivated, but to be well suited to the growth of every valuable production of countries in the temperate or the torrid zone.

The vegetable productions of Madagascar are numerous and valuable. Notwithstanding the sterility of the granitic mountains, and the bare, or moss or fern-clad plains of some portions of the interior, the shore, in general, is woody; groves, with pleasing frequency, adorn the landscape; shrubs and brushwood decorate and clothe many parts of the island. The vast extent, the unbroken solitude and gloom of its impenetrable forests, where, under the continued influence of a tropical sun and a humid atmosphere, the growth and decay of vegetation, in its most uncontrolled spontaneity, has proceeded without interruption for centuries, present scenes of extensive and gigantic vegetation, in sublime and varied forms, rarely, perhaps, surpassed in any part of the world. Immense forests traverse the island in all directions, within which may be expected and realised all that is imposing, and wonderful, and venerable in the vegetable kingdom, where, for thousands of years, "no feller has come up against them," nor have the footsteps of man ever broken their deep and impressive silence.

The difficulty of exploring these forests, however inviting to the botanist by their promise of novelty, variety, and value, is incalculable; partly on account of the impenetrable masses of underwood, and the abundance of enormous parasitical plants, which entangle and obscure his way at almost every step;* partly from the insalubrity of the deep recesses, where no air circulates freely; and partly from the very situation of the forests themselves, stretching up the sides of precipitous mountains, spreading

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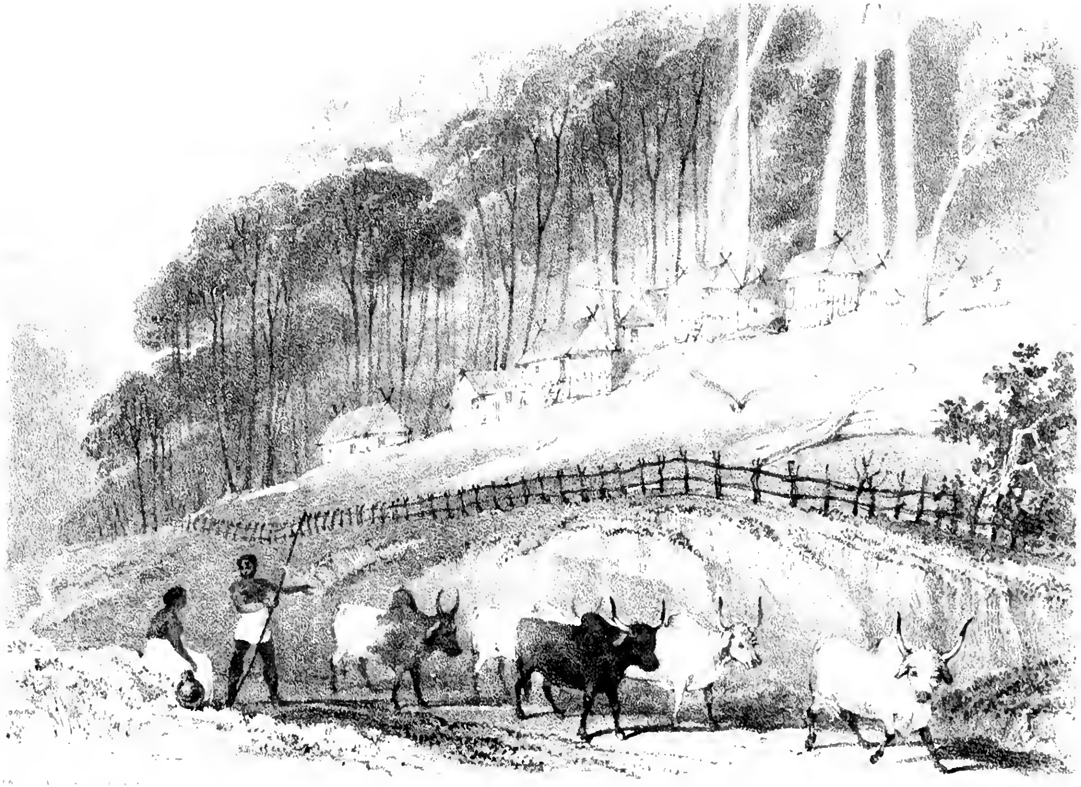
* Some idea may be formed of these impervious masses by the fact, that an immense army has at times eluded the observation of its victorious pursuers, merely by one of these almost impenetrable thickets intervening between them.



over hills broken by sudden and deep chasms, or tenaciously occupying an under-soil, from whence the upper has been washed away by heavy rains and torrents, leaving merely a net-work of roots and fibres, with fallen and decayed timber, to support the foot of the passenger.

The four principal forests in the island are, Alamazaotra, Ifohara, Bemarana, and Betsimihisatra, all of which, however, unite, and form one immense belt of forest, traversing, with occasional interruptions, nearly all the provinces in the island. These forests assume, as may be expected, different names in the different provinces which they intersect.

Amidst the recesses of the forests are numerous immense caverns, which are often frequented in times of war as places of retreat,* and at other times used by the jiolahy, or brigands, to conceal themselves and their plunder. These retreats are seldom known, except to those who live in their immediate neighbourhood, hence they are but rarely discovered by persons from other provinces.

The forests yield abundance of timber, of varied durability and value; they also furnish dye-woods, with suitable wood for cabinet-work, carpentry, and ship-building. To the patrons of botany, Madagascar presents a rich, extensive field, scarcely penetrated, almost entirely unexplored, yet promising a choice and abundant harvest. This is evident from the fact, that of the four hundred plants, collected by two botanists from Germany who visited the island some years ago, one hundred are reported to be new or undescribed species, and two hundred new varieties. An account of many of these was given in a description of plants in Mauritius, published by order of His Excellency the governor, the late Sir R. T. Farquhar. Speaking of the botany of the island, after their visit in 1822 and 1823, Messrs. Hilsenberg and Bojer observe, "An exact enumeration of all the *indigenous Madagascar plants,* is, and will long remain, a desideratum in botany. Centuries must previously elapse, and the knowledge can only be obtained through the exertions of the sons of the north, who will render the climate of Madagascar less prejudicial, by extending the limits of its cultivation, and exploring the hitherto unexplored districts. The productions of the west, north, and southern coasts, and of all the interior, remain entirely unknown, and the slender documents that have been furnished as to the vegetation of the north-east by the French naturalists, most of whom have perished from the effects of the climate, serve rather to stimulate than to satisfy a botanist's curiosity. We were so fortunate as to be the first botanists who penetrated the interior of the island with a view to study its vegetable resources, which, though possessing some points in common with other maritime countries, yet present many singular features; and of which we propose, at some future period, to publish scientific descriptions. Still we must frankly confess, that we but traced a slender path towards the approaches of those immense and inexhaustible natural riches, of which the most creative fancy can hardly pencil a sketch."

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* A curious instance of this kind occurred some time ago in the Sakalava country. Radama, with a large army, undertook the subjugation of the province. At the close of the campaign, he married Rasalina, daughter of the king of the Sakalavas. Referring afterwards to the war between Radama and her father, she remarked to some officers who had accompanied the king, "We saw you, during your whole march, and observed all your movements in search of us. We were near you in the woods, and concealing ourselves in caverns; and on one occasion you actually walked over our heads, without ever imagining we were so near." Yet there were several thousand persons with Radama, and as many with the Sakalava prince.

Without, in the present work, attempting a description of the greater part of the plants and trees of Madagascar;

among its many valuable and indigenous productions, it may not be unsuitable to mention the following:—

The ravinala, *urania speciosa;* fotabe, *barringtonia speciosa;* filao, *casuarina equisetifolia;* baobab, *adansonia*, found abundantly on the western coast; the highly valuable rofia, a species of *cyrus;* ampaly, a species of *morus*, whose hard leaf is used to polish wood-ware; ebony, the finest kind of *diospyrus ebenaster;* avoha, or *dais Madag.*; from which a coarse kind of paper has been manufactured on the eastern coast; *tapia edulis*, on which a native silkworm is extensively reared; the tamarind, which abounds on the western coast, but will not thrive in the interior; amiena, *urtica furialis*, on which the native voaloboka, or Madagascar grape, is often trained; aviavy, a species of Indian fig, and amontana and voara, other species of fig; Indian betel; foraha, *callophyllum inophyllum*, the dragon tree; the vakoa, (vaquois of the French,) or pandanus, of which there are three species known, viz. *P. hofa*, *P. sylvestris*, *P. longifolius pyramidalis*, the last being found in Antongil bay; and the bamboo, *bambusa arundinacea*, found in some parts so abundant as to have given its name, *volo*, to a part of the country called I-volo-ina.

To these may be added the azaina, (azign of Chapelier,) which has been regarded by some as the most useful tree in Madagascar. It is the *chrysopia fasciculata.* Three other species of it have been met with, viz. *verrucosa*, *pomifera*, and *parviflora.* They belong to the family of the *guttiferæ*, and produce a great quantity of yellow juice or resin, called by the natives *kitsy*, and used by them in fastening knives, &c. into their handles. The tree is used for the construction of canoes; which are made by scooping out the trunk. The *hymenæa verrucosa* is also found, and affords a large supply of gum copal. The voahena abounds, which yields the gum elastic; the roindambo, a species of *smilax*, but not the true sarsaparilla; the avozo, *laurus sassafras*, and belahy, a species of *simaroba*. Zahana, *bignonia articulata*, is used for spear-handles, walking-sticks, &c., and partly for the same purposes, the voankitsihity, or *bignonia Telfaria*, of Boyer; zozoro, is the *papyrus* of Madagascar; several species of *hibiscus* and *mimosa* are also found; the former is used for the manufacture of cordage, and a coarse beaten cloth; the latter, called fano, is frequently planted near the tombs of the Vazimba, in Imerina.

There must also be added to the list, the seva, *buddleia Mad.*; the *cytisus caja*, or pigeon-pea, (native name ambarivatry;) the songosongo, a noble species of *euphorbia*, employed as a common fence in cultivated lands; laingio, *sophonicus lingum*, a plant used by the natives in cleaning their teeth; and the *tangena veneniflua*, of which tree, and its medicinal qualities, a description will be given in the account of the ordeal of tangena, in which it is employed with such fatal effect.

Madagascar yields also an ample supply of spices; *e. g.* the *agathophyllum aromaticum*, called by the natives, ravintsara, "the excellent leaf," on account of its delicious flavour; the longoza, *curcuma zedoaria;* also ginger, wild pepper, capsicums, and turmeric, called tantamo, *curcuma longa.** There abounds also fary, sugar-cane; landihazo, the cotton plant; paraky, tobacco; rongona, hemp; and the indigo plant, besides several trees and plants used by the natives in dyeing.

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* For several of the scientific designations of the native plants above noticed, we are indebted to Professor Bojer, of Mauritius, who kindly supplied them to Mr. Freeman, on his late visit to that island.

Of native productions, used as articles of food, must be specified rice, as holding the principal place.* Of the sorts cultivated in Madagascar, modern botanists have enumerated eleven varieties. The oldest people in the country agree in affirming, that this article of food, which, with the exception of the Sakalavas, may be regarded as the staff of life to the Malagasy, is of comparatively recent origin. This opinion may probably, however, refer more strictly to the introduction of rice into the interior of the island, and its cultivation there, as Flacourt gives a description of the different kinds of rice cultivated in the island before his time, nearly two hundred years ago.

The cocoa-nut is also thought to be of recent date in the island, and is supposed to have been borne by the waves from some other soil, and washed to the shores of Madagascar about one hundred and fifty years ago. The bread-fruit tree is of still more recent introduction. Plantains and bananas have been known from time immemorial. There are also several kinds of yams, called by the natives, ovy; the manioc plant, also called manga-hazo; Indian corn, or maize, and large millet; several kinds of beans, gourds, melons, pine-apples, and earth-nuts. Lemons, oranges, citrons, limes, peaches, and mulberries also flourish luxuriantly; some of which, it is said, were first planted by Flacourt in the south of the island. Many edible roots and vegetables grown in the neighbouring islands, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in Europe, have been introduced within the last few years, partly by the late James Hastie, esq. and Mr. Brady, and still more extensively by the members of the Mission. To the latter the island is indebted for several varieties of the Cape vine, the Cape fig, quinces, pomegranates, and, as an experiment, walnuts and almonds. Coffee has been found to succeed well. Wheat, barley, and oats have been produced, but are not much prized by the natives, and do not seem to flourish in their soil. The European potato is extensively cultivated, and highly esteemed.

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* So general is the use of this article of food, that in the ordinary language of the country, to take a meal is to eat rice; whatever besides may appear in the most sumptuous banquet, being only an accompaniment to rice.

Flowers are numerous, and rare. It is, however, only during half the year that the gardens present an inviting appearance, excepting those whose low situations admit of their being watered by channels from the rivers and fountains, or other artificial means. The alternation of long seasons of heavy rain and extreme drought, are unfavourable to the culture of flowers.

Honey and wax are abundant in or near the forests, in which also are found a number of valuable gums; and not fewer than ten or twelve kinds of oil, including that of the palma-christi, are obtained from the numerous vegetable productions of the country.

With the number and peculiarities of the feathered tribes of Madagascar, we are but imperfectly acquainted; yet no field of research appears more interesting, or promises to the student in this department of the Creator's works, a more ample reward. Domestic poultry is abundant, and may be obtained at a reasonable price. Akoho is the native name for fowls, with the addition of *lahy* to signify the male, and *vavy* the female. There are said to be several kinds of pheasants, called by the people, *akoho-ala*, wild akoho, or fowl of the woods; partridges are also met with, but they are smaller in size than those of Europe. The *akanga*, guinea-fowl, both wild and tame, is common, and found in considerable numbers.

Besides the birds which appear to be natives of the island, peacocks, turkeys, geese, and ducks, with an improved kind of fowl, have been introduced; and the latter are reared in such abundance, that numbers of them are at times sent to the Isle of France for sale. There are several kinds of pigeons in the island, and the turtle-dove, called *domohina*, is found in the woods. Birds of the eagle or falcon tribe are met with in the less frequented parts of the island; crows, hawks, and kites are also seen. The screech-owl is called by the natives vorondolo, or, bird of death; *lolo* is the name of a disease, and, when used figuratively, signifies malice. Some writers have stated that the beautiful flamingo, called by the natives tamby, is found in Madagascar; but no one of the species has been seen by any late resident in the island. There is a large-beaked bird inhabiting the desert, called sama, but the description given of this bird does not answer to that of the splendid flamingo. Wild ducks and geese, and other water-fowl, abound in the neighbourhood of the lakes and rivers; snipes are also met with.

Though the woods and forests are peopled with several varieties of paroquets, and other tribes of splendid and beautiful plumage, but few of melody in song enliven the places of their resort. A bird of the ostrich kind is said to frequent the most desert places of the island. If a bird of this species exist in the country, the story of the ambassadors, to which Marco Paulo refers, may not be totally void of foundation.*

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* The people of the island report, that at a certain season of the year an extraordinary kind of bird, which they call *rukh*, makes its appearance from the southern regions. In form, it is said to resemble the eagle, but is incomparably greater in size, being so large and strong as to seize an elephant, and to lift it into the air, from whence it lets it fall to the ground,

We have only noticed some of the more useful and conspicuous among the feathered tribes: that the birds are numerous, and exhibit many distinguishing characteristics, may be gathered from the following popular fable, under which some Malagasian Æsop has expressed his ideas of the difficulties attending the selection of a king, the extent of obligation devolving on the subjects, and the facility with which the determined and the powerful set aside all engagements with those who are unable

in order that when dead it might prey upon its carcass. Persons who have seen this bird assert, that when the wings are spread, they measure sixteen paces in extent, from point to point, and that the feathers are eight paces in length, and thick in proportion. Messer Marco Paulo, conceiving that these creatures might be griffins, such as they are represented in paintings, half birds or half lions, particularly questioned those who had reported their having seen them, as to this point; but they maintained that their shape was altogether that of birds, or, as it might be said, of the eagle. The grand khan having heard of this extraordinary relation, sent messengers to the island on the pretext of demanding the release of one of his servants who had been detained there; but in reality, to examine the circumstances of the country, and the truth of the wonderful things told of it. When they returned to the presence of his majesty, they brought with them, as I have heard, a feather of the rukh, positively affirmed to have measured ninety spans, and the quill-part to have been two palms in circumference. This surprising exhibition afforded his majesty extreme pleasure; and upon those by whom it was presented, he bestowed valuable gifts.

On this marvellous account, the intelligent editor of Marco Paulo observes, "All who have read the stories of the Thousand-and-one Nights, must be acquainted with the size and powers of this extraordinary bird, there called the roc; but its celebrity is not confined to that work. 'Rukh,' says the Arabic and Persian Dictionary, 'is the name of a monstrous bird, which is said to have powers sufficient to carry off a live rhinoceros.'" Its existence seems indeed to have been universally credited in the East, and those Arabian navigators with whom our author conversed would not hesitate to attest a fact of such notoriety, but they might find it convenient, at the same time, to lay the scene at a place so little frequented as the southern extremity of Madagascar, because the chances were small of any contradiction from local knowledge. Mr. Marsden supposes this bird to have been nothing more than the albatross of the sea, or the condor of Africa or America.

to resist. The translation of this fable is furnished by Mr. Baker.

On a certain occasion, it is said, the birds, having no king, assembled to inquire who should be elected sovereign: when the land-fowl and the water-fowl first discussed the question, the land-fowls inquired of the water-fowls "Shall a sovereign be sought from amongst us, or you?" "Amongst you," replied the latter, "will we seek a suitable king; for with us there is none good." "We agree," said the land-fowl: "gather yourselves together to select your sovereign, and we will pass one by one through your assembly, that you may see who is most suitable." To this the water-fowl assented.

Then the water-fowl came on land to the foot of a hill, and the land-fowl assembled at the top of it. The water-fowl then sent the Asirity to ascertain if all the land-fowl were assembled; when all being arranged, the latter sent first of all the tararaka, to pass through the assembly; but when he was passing in review, the water-fowl exclaimed, "Who would make this contemptible tararaka sovereign, a ravenous bird, forsooth, that sleeps by day?" So when they refused to accept of the tararaka, he stood on the opposite side; and after a while the papango (kite) was sent, and whilst he stood amidst the water-fowl, some of the land-fowl said, "Come, let us make *this* sovereign;" but some of the water-fowl exclaimed, "Who would make this sovereign? he eats rats!" So they would not agree; they then sent the voromahery (hawk,) and some said, "Let us make this the king." Others rejoined, "This, indeed, we will make supreme." Some, however, objected, "Make this sovereign! he steals and eats chickens, and there is not much difference between chickens and some other birds; who would make him sovereign?" So he was rejected.

The fable brings forward in a similar manner the kitukitukia, a thin bird, the size of a pigeon; the goāika, a kind of crow, striped black and white; the takatra, (that eats frogs,) a small bird, the size of a blackbird, objected to on account of the proverb, "The takatra on the side of a rice-plat sleeps not, but disturbs his spirit with watchings, and because of his ugly voice, 'mitakatakatra.'" Then came the fihiaka; but he steals chickens. The vanobe (a large stork,) but they laughed at his long neck, and objected to his eating their food, frogs. The vorompotsy, (white bird) about the size of a crow, quite white; and of the stork species. The vorombato, (rockbird) size of a crow, of many colours. The fodilahimena, a bird the size of a sparrow, perfectly red. He was admired as beautiful, but objected to, as too small. The next is asikirity, a bird as large as a wild pigeon; as likewise the next, asintima, then the lorohitra. According to the fable, many others, whose names are not specified, passed in review, until the akanga, (guinea-fowl) came. Him they chose, and appointed sovereign, and in the evening all were sworn to allegiance, and denounced if not attending on the following day. The appointment of a king was, however, rendered void by the hail, for a shower happening to fall, the vulture professed to think that God was judging or condemning them for appointing so inefficient a king, when one by one they all forswore their allegiance, and departed, each to his home, leaving the weak, as before—a prey to the strong.

The word vorona signifies bird, and is prefixed to the name of many birds, as the following:—

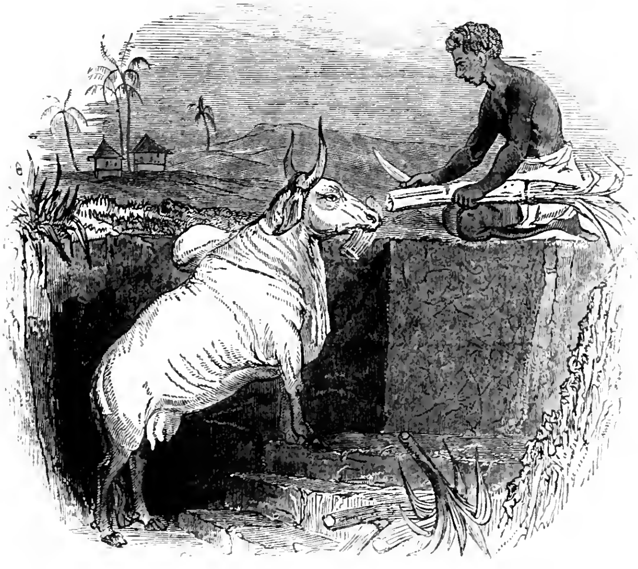
Voromahazo, voromailala—tame pigeon: Vorombaazaha, (literally)—white people's birds, *i.e.* duck: vorombe, goose: vorombango, vorombola, vorombozaka—a bird much abhorred by the people, and thence called bozaka, grass, fuel:

voromjago, vorompotsy—a white bird about the size of a pigeon or sea-gull; supposed to be a great favourite with the cattle, from the circumstance of its following the herds, and feeding on the insects found on the bodies of the oxen: vorompamo, voronakondro, (lit.) bird of the banana, being a blue and brown bird, the size of a pigeon: vorondrano, (lit.) of water: voronandro, (lit.)—of day: vorondolo, the abhorred owl: vorondoza, vorondreo—a blue bird of the desert, the size of a pigeon: vorondriaka—of the flood: vorondry, vorongo, voronkahaka — like a crow, with a white neck: voronkohy, voronosy—of the goat: vorontiada, vorontiaka, vorontianomby—beloved by cattle: vorontsiloza —not dangerous or dreadful, a turkey.

Although the quadrupeds of Madagascar extend to but few varieties, they comprehend the kinds most useful and essential to a nation in the early stages of its civilization. Horned cattle are numerous, both tame and wild. Many of the latter resemble, in shape and size, the cattle of Europe. The former are of the zebu, or buffalo kind, and have a large hump or bunch on the back between the shoulders. Herds of cattle constitute the principal wealth of a number of the chiefs or nobles of the island, and not only furnish a large portion of their means of subsistence, but are exported in great numbers to the Islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, and furnished to shipping visiting the coast for supplies.

Individuals residing in the capital, who possess large herds of cattle, generally send them under the care of their slaves into some unenclosed part of the country, fifty or a hundred miles distant, where they are kept till required for the home market, or sent to the coast for sale or exportation. Many that are kept up and fed, resemble the prize animals of the English market, and are reserved for some distinguished occasion of domestic, civil, or religious festivity. Their mode of feeding their oxen is singular. Each village has its fahitra, or rather cattle-folds, into which the horned cattle, for security, are driven every evening, and whence they go forth to pasturage in the morning. Cattle are also kept in the fold for the purpose of being fattened.

The fahitra is an enclosure, usually a large square pit or excavation, dug out in front of the owner's house, and within the walls by which the family residence is surrounded. It is generally about six yards square, and about five feet deep. A sort of shed is sometimes erected in it, under which the provision is placed for the cattle.



The provision is sometimes placed in a kind of rack, but it is also placed so high, that the animal is compelled to stand, the whole time of feeding, in a position that forces the chief weight of its body on its hind legs. Whether this custom originated in accident or design, is uncertain, but it is universal, and is supposed to aid in fattening the animal better than our European mode of allowing them to stand on a level floor. Sometimes animals are fed in this manner for three or four years, and attain an enormous size, especially those belonging to the rich, and intended for the day of slaughter at the annual feast, or some other season of rejoicing and display.

Besides cattle, sheep, and swine, goats are also numerous. The sheep, which appear to be aboriginal, resemble those of the Cape of Good Hope, covered with short hair instead of wool, and having large tails, that weigh from ten to twenty pounds each. Their flesh is considered greatly inferior to the mutton of Europe.

Tame swine are of comparatively modern introduction, and, from the name soa, or kisoa, seem to have been brought from some part of India. There is a species of wild hog in the forests, said to have two short horns growing from the snout. It is supposed by some to resemble "the wild boar of Africa." The substances supposed to be horns appear to be only the large tusks which grow out of the upper jaw, and running upwards towards the eyes, through a kind of groove in the flesh at the edges of the snout, in some respects resemble horns. Hedge-hogs, (tandraka) of which there are several species, are numerous, and their flesh is occasionally eaten by the natives. To these may be added an animal of the badger kind, found chiefly, if not exclusively, in the Sakalava country; it is called fosa.

Dogs and cats, both wild and tame, abound in most parts of the island. The wild cat, called kary, though exceedingly beautiful, is an object of great terror to the natives, who consider it an animal of ill omen. The native dogs are small, and the attempts to introduce the Newfoundland and mastiff species have not succeeded.

Among the wild animals may be mentioned the baboon, called by the natives tratratratra. Of this animal there are two varieties, as well as of the amboanala, wild dog of the forest. A species of monkey, found also in the woods, is occasionally killed and eaten by the natives: there are also two other kinds of monkey, both having long rough hair; one kind is as large as a spaniel dog, the other is exceedingly small.

The following interesting particulars, related by the late James Hastie, esq., British resident at the capital, appear to refer to the larger of the two kinds last mentioned. In the journal of one of his expeditions to the north of the islands, he remarks:—"The solicitude of the monkey tribe for their young has often been noticed. Wishing to have a few, I shot several, and, among them, unintentionally, some females carrying their young ones. When alarmed, they carefully conceal these under their arms, and often place themselves in the fork, or behind the branch, of a tree, so that it is not easy to see the young. I shot a female on a very high branch, and when she had tumbled within twenty feet of the ground, she let fall a young one, which happened to alight on a bush very near me. In this position it was seen by a male, possibly its father, who immediately descended the tree, and, grasping the little one hastily, regained his elevated post, and actually cried as he looked down at the mother, with whom a second young one was discovered clinging closely under her arm: this latter was taken from her with some difficulty. I shot another mother, the young one of which fell to the ground, and immediately leaped upon one of my dogs, that had long soft hair, an animal so very docile and quiet, that she did not attempt to remove this strange companion until it endeavoured to get under her fore-leg, which not being able to effect, it clambered up a branch, and was soon received by one of its own species.

"The boys who followed me brought several young monkeys, whose mothers had been shot, to the camp. I took two of the largest, and placed them on some branches put up for shelter outside my tent; but they continued to get together, and each being desirous of being carried as they were accustomed to be, they constantly grasped each other, and fell to the ground, where they continued to struggle, each trying to get under the arm of the other, until separated."

Besides the animals already mentioned, there is a species of fox with a large bushy tail; the animal is called amboahaolo; also a kind of wild dog which haunts the caverns among the rocks in the neighbourhood of the villages. In the forests, brown and grey squirrels are numerous; besides these, and rats and mice, the large-winged bat is found in many parts of the island, and is at times eaten by the natives.

During the reign of Radama, horses and other useful animals were brought to the island. The horse is held in great estimation by the people; a good horse having been frequently sold for from sixty to one hundred pounds sterling. They have been greatly multiplied lately, and their value has consequently decreased.

The crocodile is the most numerous and conspicuous among the amphibious animals of Madagascar: these ferocious creatures swarm in the rivers and lakes, to the great terror of the natives, and render navigation in their fragile and unsteady barks, often exceedingly perilous.

In size, the crocodiles vary in different parts of the island: the largest that are found in the lakes on the eastern coast do not usually exceed fifteen feet in length; but in the Sakalava country, they are said to attain a greater size, and to manifest a more perilous ferocity. Their body is of a brown or stone colour, reddish on the breast, and yellow underneath the belly. That the rivers and lakes are full of them, and that it is unsafe to walk along their banks, is an exaggerated statement. That they exist in the rivers is true, and to bathe or swim or ford in some places is hazardous; but there is no danger in walking on the banks of any of the waters of the island. Crocodiles are found in most rivers or lakes between the mountain torrents of the interior, and the partially salt waters of the coast; though there are many large rivers in which neither these reptiles, nor any of the fish on which they prey, are ever found. This is perhaps caused by the coldness of the water, and the rocky barrenness of the beds through which these rivers flow.

In the brackish water, extending from the junction of the river with the sea, to a distance of about seven miles or more towards the interior, crocociles are never found; nor in water absolutely salt. Their favourite places are the deep rugged banks of a river or lake overhung with trees, and containing numerous cavities in which they can hide themselves, having also a gradually sloping sand-bank, up which they can crawl to deposit their eggs. In such situations they abound, and can often be heard at the bottom of the water, and especially underneath the overhanging trees, uttering a shrill sound, not much unlike the mewing of a kitten. In some parts, the natives affirm that they are so numerous, as to cause the place to resemble a plain covered with bullocks. They feed principally upon fish, and may be seen and heard chasing their prey in the waters of the lake with astonishing velocity, and apparently in concert with each other. They fasten their teeth upon any animal that approaches in silence their domain. Bullocks are often seized as they are swimming across the water, and are sometimes successfully attacked whilst drinking. But besides preying upon the animals that venture within their reach, they seize and eat with great voracity their own young. They have the sagacity to watch at those places where the females deposit their eggs, for the appearance of the young, which, on bursting the shell, usually run directly to the water. Many of the natives state that they have often seen a line of old crocodiles station themselves near the banks on which eggs have been deposited; and when the young ones have, in emerging from their shell, hastened to the water, their first progress through this their genial element, has only been a passage to the open sepulchres edged round with terrific teeth, which the extended jaws of the close-formed file of full-grown crocodiles have presented, and by which they have been instantly devoured.

Sometimes the young crocodiles take the wrong direction, and are caught by the natives in the rice grounds. Many of the crocodiles' eggs are destroyed by birds, especially by vultures, and also by serpents, but many more by the natives, who take off the rind or shell, boil the eggs, and dry them in the sun; after which, they are preserved for use or sale. A single family have been seen to have as many as five hundred eggs drying at one time. The crocodiles always deposit their eggs on the sand; and seek the partial concealment afforded by some overhanging branch, or cave, or hole in the sand, or a very retired situation. It is not known what number of eggs are deposited at a time, or in a season, by one animal; the natives say, "many, very many:" between fifty and sixty have been found in one animal. They begin to lay their eggs in August, when the summer is coming on; hence it appears, that rain, and the consequent obscuration of the sun's rays, do not destroy the vitality of the egg.

The crocodiles are known to be afraid of noise, or any disturbance of the water; they flee into their recesses at the sound of thunder, and agitation of wind. Hence the natives are but rarely attacked by them, as they beat the water with long poles, and make a great noise. By using such means of deterring the crocodiles, they generally swim their herds of bullocks over the river in safety; and sometimes after one has disappeared, he is recovered by the terrific animals releasing him before any material injury is done. Yet, when pressed by hunger, the crocodiles become more audacious, and are said to approach near enough to be seen by persons fording a river, when they are only kept off by the travellers beating the water with spears on each side as they pass, at the same time shouting and hallooing with all their might.

That these means are not always sufficient, is clearly shown by the following account, given by Mr. Hastie, of the passage of a number of cattle over the Betsiboka river, in 1824."

"A company of soldiers were sent across the river, with orders to fire blank cartridge, to prevent the crocodiles attacking the bullocks, and a similar fire was kept up on the side from whence they embarked. The endeavours of the parties thus employed, though unremitting, did not, however, prevent these bold animals, with which the river abounds, from seizing, and regaling themselves on, the cattle: some herds suffered a loss of three, some of five, and some of more than ten. Putting out of consideration the loss thus sustained, it certainly was an interesting sight to behold a beast carried down by the alligators, speedily torn to pieces by the hungry animals, some of whom were soon seen near the surface of the water, tossing up portions of their prey into the air, previous to consuming it; while the frequency of this occurrence, under such circumstances, and in the presence of an almost constant firing, produced an effect at once surprising and strange. I have often seen the alligators bring their prey to the bank, and feed; but I have not any reason to believe that they are incapable of feeding under water. When a bullock was seized, thirty or forty crocodiles were sometimes seen about it, but I did not notice any instance of one attempting to take a piece from another. I remained at the river until noon, and got seven that had crept up far on the land, after having satisfied themselves with beef. Some of these were about sixteen feet in length, and a boy who accompanied me, shot one that measured twenty-three feet; he found it to be a female, and on opening the stomach, found it almost filled with beef."

It is generally believed by the natives of Madagascar, that the crocodile never, except to avenge an injury, destroys innocent persons; and the fact of any one's being destroyed by a crocodile, makes the people shake their heads with horror at the unknown guilt of the person destroyed. Attaching the popular ideas of supremacy and equity to the andrian-andrano, king of the waters, orators who flatter the sovereign are accustomed to say, "A crocodile in the water art thou, not preying on the upright, but surely destroying the guilty." Women, however, have been known to enter the water, and combat the king of the flood in his own element, where they have succeeded in destroying him.

Mr. Freeman has supplied a translation of the following amusing native fable of a serpent, a young crocodile, and a dog: in which, among other things, the origin of the crocodile's hostility to the dog is attempted to be shown.

A serpent and a young crocodile dwelt in the same part of the country. The serpent fixed itself in a tree by the water-side; and, underneath the same tree, the young crocodile watched for prey. After a time a dog came to drink; the crocodile pursued him; down came the serpent, to stop the crocodile. "What have you to do with me?" said the crocodile.—"Why, you are seeking to eat every body that passes this way," replied the serpent.—"Be quiet," said the crocodile, "lest I give you a blow with my tail, and cut you in two."—"And pray what are you?" asked the serpent: "I suppose you are thinking that because I have neither hands nor feet, I can do nothing; but, perhaps, you have not looked at my tail, how sharp it is."—"Cease your noise," replied the crocodile, "or I'll just break you in two." The serpent then becoming excessively angry, struck the crocodile with his tail, and wounded his loins so as nearly to break his body: all the fish were astonished, and, addressing the crocodile, said, "How is this, you that can conquer people and cattle, however large, and anything else?" The crocodile, ashamed, dived out of sight, while the serpent resumed his place on the tree. The crocodile, however, hoping to repay him, kept watching for prey. After a time, there came a goose to the water; the crocodile pursued and got hold of him, when down came the serpent to stop him as before. "Where are you going?" cried the crocodile.—"Let that goose alone," said the serpent, "lest I kill you." The crocodile replied contemptuously, and the serpent, enraged, exclaimed, " Well, this time see if you are not the worse for it," and then he struck the crocodile, and wounded him on the face, and made him scream again. So he was conquered that time, and the goose got off; and all the fish came again, and said to the crocodile, " How is it that you are beaten by yonder little serpent,—you are wise and powerful, and that little fellow comes and beats you !" Completely ashamed, again the crocodile hid himself in the water, and began to think by what means he might conquer this serpent upon the tree. After thinking a long time, the crocodile determined on boring a hole through the root of the tree; and for a whole week he kept on boring. Presently, a dog comes to drink; afterwards the goose; also a man: but the crocodile keeping at his work, the serpent exulted in having intimidated his adversary, and said, " There's nothing then so strong as I am." The crocodile heard him, and laboured with all his might to finish boring at the root, one branch of which alone remained to cut. The crocodile then watched at the water-side a good while, when down came the dog to drink;—the crocodile pursued him;—the serpent, as before, came to oppose him, calling out, " Let him alone there, lest you get the worst of it."—" You," says the crocodile, " do not fear god ; yonder dogs deceive us, and that's the reason I pursue them; and as to people, I never touch them, unless they are guilty of witchcraft. I only eat the small things, (poultry, &c.;)—so just let me alone." When the serpent heard that, he replied, " There is no god, for if there were, I should have had both hands and feet;—there is no god at all. But I'll have your carcase to-day." Then the dog and the serpent, together, made an attack on the crocodile; the crocodile got weaker, and dived into the water, when all the fishes came and expressed their astonishment, as before, that he should be conquered by that little serpent. "Wait a little," says the crocodile, "and you'll see I am not conquered by him. The serpent got up the tree as usual; the crocodile watched; bored the hole completely—then looked up and saw the serpent sound asleep on a branch overhanging the water; then cutting what remained of the root, the tree broke, and fell into the water, the serpent falling with it. Then all the fishes acknowledged that the crocodile was superior, for he had got the serpent into the water, and made him dive in it, and kept him under water half an hour. The serpent, however, survived it, and repented of what he had done: "O that I had never opposed you; only let me go, and I'll never attack you again."—"Ah!" says the crocodile, "but as often as I pursued the dog, I was pursued by you; so you must suffer in your turn." Thus the crocodile made him heartily repent before he let him go; then, said the serpent, "If ever I touch you again, may I be conquered," (may god subdue me.) After that, the crocodile let him go. He was glad to get off, but he had been beaten, and took an oath not to renew the attack when the crocodile went to look out for prey. The crocodile, however, owed the dog a grudge because he had attacked him, and so laid all his family under a curse to devour the dog whenever opportunity offered. "Unless you do that," said he, "may you die without posterity, for yonder dog took part with another against me."

That is said to be the origin of the hatred between the dog and the crocodile.—It is not probable that the latter suffer much from the former, who are themselves frequently devoured by the formidable enemies. Mr. Hastie mentions, in his journal, that he was awoke one night by a most plaintive howl from his dog, which slept at the door of his tent; and that, on rushing out, he was just in time to see a crocodile dive into the adjacent stream with the dog in his jaws.

Like the ancient Egyptians, and the inhabitants of Sumatra, with some other parts of the East, in the present day, the Malagasy regard the crocodile with superstitious veneration. By the latter he is esteemed the king of the waters, and they not only consider him as supreme in his own element, but seem to suppose the animal has a right to be so. To dispute it, according to their ideas, would be to expose themselves to his vengeance, and to consequent death. To shake a spear over a river, is regarded as challenging the lord of the waters, and exposing themselves to his wrath the next time they had to pass that or any other stream. To throw any kind of manure into the river, especially that of cows, is deemed to be an unpardonable affront; and it is thought to be well for the unhappy man who commits such an outrage, if he forfeit not his life for his temerity. Hence, perhaps, it happens they seldom attempt to destroy the crocodile, and rather avoid whatever they suppose likely to provoke him. They have ody mamba, charms against the crocodile, which are sometimes thrown into the river, but generally carried about the person.

The natives also, at times, when about to cross a river, pronounce a solemn oath, or enter into an engagement to acknowledge the sovereignty of the crocodile in his own element. Monsieur de V., whose voyage to Madagascar was published in 1722, after speaking of an aged native who had been occupied at the water's edge nearly half an hour in pronouncing his oath, observes, "After this, elevating his voice, so that he might be heard across the river, he addressed himself to the crocodile, urging him to do him no injury, because he had never done him (the crocodile) any; and assuring him that he had never engaged in war against any of his species; on the contrary, that he had always entertained the highest veneration for him; at the same time adding, that if he came to attack him, vengeance, sooner or later, would follow; and that if he devoured him, all his relatives, and all his race, would declare war against him. This harangue occupied a quarter of an hour, after which he dashed fearlessly into the stream." They happen, he adds, however, sometimes to be caught, when they are not armed with muskets; and then, instead of attributing the accident to their own want of precaution, they imagine that it arises from some failure in their mode of taking the customary oath.*

Many anecdotes are related by the natives, illustrating the characteristic sagacity of the dog in avoiding the jaws of these formidable enemies. When accompanying their masters across the streams infested by crocodiles, the dogs are accustomed to bark and howl, while the natives shout and halloo: and it is stated by the people, that a dog, when about to cross a river alone, has been known to remain near the edge of the water, at one part of the stream, barking for a considerable time, as if urging cattle to the water, and then running with the utmost speed to a distant part of the stream, and there hastening with all its might to the opposite side. The barking at the first place is said to have attracted many crocodiles within hearing to the spot, and thus secured for the dog a safe passage at the part actually crossed.

Though the sea in the neighbourhood of this island abounds with every variety of fish, they are not abundant in many of the lakes in the interior; and the capital is but ill supplied with this valuable article of food. Oysters are numerous in some parts of the coast, and eels and crawfish are met with in the rivers and lakes of the island; the former are abundant, and are much esteemed by both natives and foreigners. Various attempts have been made to convey fish occasionally from Itasy, a lake in the province of Imamo, to Tananarivo, where the worthy citizens have enough of the epicurean in their natures to know that good fish is good eating. The distance is not more than eighty miles, but the badness of the roads renders all communication extremely difficult. Fish, it is true, has been conveyed to the capital; but the time consumed in the carriage has not improved its flavour. A Mons. Le Gros expended considerable sums of money in endeavouring to stock a pond in his garden near Tananarivo, from Itasy, but failed of success. In 1828, Radama, who was desirous of seeing a plan for supplying Tananarivo with fish carried into effect, afforded every possible facility to Prince Coroller, for making the attempt on a large scale. Ponds were accordingly formed at two intermediate stations: the first at Antongona, about twenty-five miles from the capital; the second, at Ambohilehivy, about twenty miles further. About one hundred fish were by this means brought to the king's pond at Mahazoarivo near the capital. It is, however, feared they have not benefited by the change. As pigs, goats, and other useful articles of food, are forbidden at Tananarivo by the idol Rakelimalaza, it is not surprising that the natives should desire to have, as some indemnification, the delicious fish of Itasy. Besides the attempts above referred to, Monsieur M'Swinney had been employed some time previously in endeavouring to carry fish from the lake at Tamatave to Tananarivo. He, however, fell a victim to the Malagasy fever, and died at the capital.

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* Voyage de Madagascar, par M. de V. Paris, 1722.

Among the reptiles of the island are lizards, scorpions, centipedes, and several kinds of spiders, called *hala*. Serpents abound in the woods, and other places in which this reptile is usually found; and though few, if any of them, are venomous, some are large, probably of the boa constrictor kind, and have been known to destroy wild cattle.

The serpents, as well as the hawks and other birds, feed on the crocodile's eggs, which are exceedingly numerous; and the ravages which these commit among the eggs, as well as the diminution of number occasioned by the crocodiles themselves, who, as already stated, devour, with a voracity unusual even amongst the lowest orders of animal creation, their own young, prevent their becoming so numerous as to destroy almost every other living creature in the vicinity of the regions to which they resort. Among the several varieties of lizards which prevail in the island, the chameleon is found; and the insect tribes of Madagascar comprehend the valuable silkworm and the brilliant firefly.

In a general description of the island of Madagascar, it would have been improper to have omitted altogether its natural history; but our means have been such as to allow us only to notice, with great brevity, some of the most prominent and general or useful objects in its several departments.

CHAP. III.

Provinces of Madagascar: their number, designations, import of the names of the twenty-two provinces of the island; their boundaries, extent, and peculiarities—Early French settlements in Madagascar—Isle of St. Mary's—Character and history of its former inhabitants—The suppression of piracy carried on from the island—Foule Point—Port and town of Tamatave—The importance of the commerce of the island—The country of the Betanimena—Culture of the mulberry; introduction of silkworms—Brigands; nature of their retreats in the forests and caverns of the interior—Peculiar insalubrity of the southern coast—Fertility and scenery of the celebrated vale of Ambolo—Fort Dauphin—Country in the neighbourhood of St. Augustine bay—Extent and peculiarities of the chief subdivisions—The Betsileo country—Provinces of the Sakalavas—The lake Imania—Barbarity of the inhabitants of Ambongo—The lake Anosy—Natural beauty of the province of Ankay; superstition of its inhabitants—The river Mangoro.

Madagascar contains twenty-two chief or larger provinces. Rochon has given some account of twenty-eight, as existing in his time. It is probable that in some instances the minor divisions of a province, or even some of the principal towns, may have been reckoned as distinct and independent provinces. Most of the provinces have three or four principal divisions or districts, and these again have numerous subdivisions; as, for example, Ankova includes Imerina, Imamo, and Vonizongo, and each of these has its numerous smaller divisions. In other instances the natural division into north and south, which obtains both in the Betsileo and Sakalava countries, may have given the appearance of a greater number of independent provinces than actually existed.

The following are the provinces into which Madagascar is at present divided.

1. Vohimarina,
2. Maroa,
3. Ivongo,
4. Mahavelona,
5. Tamatave,
6. Betanimena,
7. Anteva,
8. Matitanana,
9. Vangaidrano,
10. Anosy,
11. Androy,
12. Isienimbalala,
13. Ibara,
14. Betsileo,
15. Menabe,
16. Ambongo,
17. Iboina,
18. Antsianaka,
19. Ankay,
20. Ankova,
21. Mahafaly,
22. Fiarenana.

Having given a general description of the whole island, it will not, perhaps, be deemed wholly incompatible with the avowed design of the present work, which relates principally to the interior of Madagascar, to offer a brief sketch of its several provinces. Some of the circumstances introduced, in reference to a few of the provinces, are derived from the accounts of those who have previously written on Madagascar; the others are stated as the result of information which the Missionaries themselves obtained from various quarters in the island; and the whole may be regarded as presenting, if not a perfect exhibition of the existing state of the island, yet, certainly, such a view of it as is considered correct by the best informed natives at the Capital: it is what Madagascar is at Tananarivo believed to be, and such as eye-witnesses for the most part have described it.

Vohimarina,* the first, is the most northern province of the island; it is but thinly populated, and the soil, for the most part, is unproductive. The district is mountainous, and incapable of extensive cultivation. Iangogoro, one of the highest mountains in Madagascar, is situated in this province. It is sometimes called Vigarora. Its summit commands an extremely diversified and extensive prospect. There are here four principal ports: viz., Diegosoray (which the natives usually call Mahazeba;) Port Luquey, or Lucas; Andravena, and Vohimarina, or, as frequently spelt, Vohimaro.

South of Vohimarina, and having Antsianaka to its west, is the province of *Maroa*, the second in the list already given. The general face of the country is fertile, abounding also in hills and forests. Its population, though it cannot be regarded as numerous, is far greater than that of the province last described. Some of its vegetable productions are remarkably fine; particularly the akondro, or banana, which grows here to an extraordinary height. Maroa readily submitted to Radama in his northern expedition of 1823.

The most important circumstance, in connexion with the history of this province, relates to the French settlement at the bay of Antongil, which is situated here, in lat. 15° 25′ S. The bay is about fourteen leagues long, from north to south, and eight broad between Cape Bellones and point Baldrick. The small islet Marotte lies about one mile from the shore. The common anchorage is to the north of Marotte, a musket-shot distance. The river bears N.N.W. from the Marotte. The anchorage off this river is called Port Choiseul.

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* "Vohitra," villages, and "marina" level or just; i. e. the flat or equitable country; or "Vohimaro," many villages.

The province of *Ivong*, the third, lies to the south of Maroa, and is separated from Mahavelona by the river Manangoro, which rises in a lake to the west of Antsianaka. There is also in this province another considerable river, called Penimbala, and a port called Tahotaingia, or, as sometimes marked in maps, Teinteigne. It is generally pronounced by captains and traders at Mauritius, Tang-tang. The general appearance of the country resembles that of Maroa, being hilly, woody, and fertile. Cattle and considerable quantities of rice are exported from this province for the markets of Bourbon and Mauritius.

The Isle of St. Mary, which occupies so prominent a place in the history of Madagascar, lies off this province, at the distance of two or three leagues, and is about forty miles N.N.E. from Foule Point. The inhabitants call themselves Zafy-Ibrahim, i. e. descendants of Abraham, and their island, Nosy-Ibrahim, Island of Abraham. The natives of the province do not generally designate themselves by this title; and it is not improbable that the name originated with some of the pirates, who were all Europeans, and who made their settlement in the Isle of St. Mary, and afterwards intermarrying with the natives, assumed the title as one of honour—one of the most innocent, perhaps, of their piratical acts.

The Isle of St. Mary's is represented as exceedingly fertile, and extends, in a north-easterly direction, from 17° 6′ to 16° 37′. On the west side is a bay, having an islet called Quail's Island, at its entrance. Here small vessels may obtain shelter. The place is far from being salubrious. The French, who from time to time sent recruits to replace the troops who died in their establishment there, gave to the island the designation of "The Grave of the French." To this melancholy picture of the spot should perhaps be appended the redeeming consideration, so happily, so philanthropically suggested by the "philosophic" Rochon:—"The greatest care was taken, it is true, to send no persons thither to settle, except such as could occasion little hurt to society if they perished."

From the time that Vasco de Gama in 1498 opened a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, numerous pirates infested those seas. They became, at length, so formidable by the success of their nefarious transactions, as to render a general effort, by the European powers interested in the Indian trade, indispensably necessary for their suppression. In the prospect of their being thus cut off from their usual resources, they formed an establishment in the Isle of St. Mary about the year 1724, and gained, by their assiduous attentions, and valuable importations, the good-will and friendship of the natives, who were ignorant of the iniquitous means by which the treasures brought to their island were obtained. They were, however, so vigorously pursued, even to their places of most secure retreat, by vessels from Europe, that their system was annihilated, and their ships burnt. After this they appear to have settled in different parts of the northern coast of Madagascar, wherever an eligible opening was presented, and connected themselves, there is every reason to believe, with the traffic in slaves, the greatest scourge ever known to the islanders, equally degrading to the inhuman trader and his hapless victims.

The next province, *Mahavelona*,* is the fourth, which is separated from Ivongo by the Manangoro. The soil is fertile, and the country is woody, and, to some extent, brought under cultivation. It is, however, stated by the natives, that the plantations are frequently destroyed by irruptions of herds of wild hogs from the adjoining forests. Abundance of game may be found in this district: excellent oysters are plentiful on its shores, at the head of the bay of Antongil, and especially in the bay of Ifenoarivo. The principal trading ports in this province are, Marofototra, or Foule Pointe, and Ifenoarivo. The latter is the most valuable, and is usually called by traders from the Isle of France, Feneriffe. It is well situated for the purposes of traffic, having the advantage of water-carriage from a considerable distance in the interior. By this means, rice, yams, and other vegetables are conveyed to the coast with greater despatch and facility, and at a less expense, than in most other ports.

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* Signifying "causing to live," or "productive."

Foule Pointe, called also Marofototra (names of the same signification—the former, French, the latter, Malagasy,) is important for trade on its own account, and is a desirable station for traders, on account also of its contiguity to Tamatave, Ifenoarivo, Antongil bay, and St. Mary's. The two principal rivers in Mahavelona are, Ony-be, and Ifontsy, which divides it from Tamatave.

The province of Mahavālona is considered as highly insalubrious. Many of the troops sent to Foule Point by Radama, in 1823, were seized with fever, and the forces of the sovereign so reduced by its prevalence, that not long afterwards Itasy, a native chieftain, raised the standard of rebellion. He was, however, taken prisoner in 1827, and conducted to the capital, Tananarivo, where he still remains under guard.

A number of Arabs, as well as French traders from Mauritius and Bourbon, have settlements in this part of the country. The Arabs have, in fact, established themselves along the whole eastern coast of Madagascar.

Tamatave, the fifth, is the next province, and lies to the south of Mahavelona. Its principal town or port on the coast, takes the name of the district itself, which Europeans call Tamatave, or Tamatavy, but by the natives it is universally called Taomasina.

The port of Tamatave is one of the finest on the eastern coast of the island.* The adjoining reefs are extensive, and the swell and surf heavy and appalling, but they are considered dangerous only to vessels entering or leaving when the wind blows strong from the north-east. Tamatave is a small and irregularly-built village, situated on a low point of land, with an anchorage in about nine fathoms water within the coral reef. Its latitude is 18° 12″ south. There are about two hundred houses in the village, and from eight hundred to a thousand inhabitants. The habitations of the natives are of very inferior construction; those belonging to European and Creole traders are better; and a few are comfortable and substantial. The Hovas erected a battery at the northern extremity of the village: being, however, merely an enclosure formed of strong poles, and containing three or four native houses belonging to the government, together with with a powder-magazine and several smaller tenements, the whole was destroyed by the French in their attack on the island, in 1829. Another battery, built of coral, has been subsequently erected near the spot, and planted with a few pieces of cannon.

The materials employed in the construction of the houses in Tamatave are the ravin-ala, or traveller's-tree, the rofia, and bamboo; the roofs are composed of the leaves of the traveller's-tree, which soon decay. The houses consist of but one room, though this is sometimes divided by a fragile partition of matting. The floor is of flattened bamboos fastened to poles, which are raised in order to avoid the dampness, that would otherwise be equally unpleasant and injurious.

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* It might be more strictly correct to speak of the roads of Tamatave, rather than to call it a port.

The principal exports from Tamatave consist in rice, poultry, bullocks, and rofia cloth; and several vessels are employed in the trade between this port and Mauritius. Some also visit it from Bourbon, for the same purposes. The neighbourhood is extremely damp and swampy; and, as may be supposed, the village and its vicinity are at all times far from being salubrious; but the most unhealthy period is from the middle of November to the beginning of March. The freshness and luxuriance of the verdure give so delightful an appearance to the scenery, that a stranger can scarcely regard it as the seat of disease; but a few days' residence makes him sensible of the constant exhalations from the marshes, which are so productive of the justly dreaded fever of the coast.

The country is woody and marshy. A considerable quantity of rice is cultivated here, called the tavy, which is grown, not on the low ground, where it may be constantly covered with water, but on high ground, frequently the side of a hill. The culture of the rice is extremely simple. The trees are cut down, and, after burning the stumps, the rice-seed is planted in the spot, covered with the ashes, and with but little subsequent care the crop is generally abundant.

In the interior of this province is the fine lake of Nosivé, one of the most extensive in the island. This lake is from twenty to twenty-five miles in length. It contains several small islands, some of which are inhabited. It forms part of the series of lakes already noticed, and which are known to reach upwards of two hundred miles on the eastern coast of Madagascar.

Eight or nine miles from Tamatave, is the village of Anjolokefa, occasionally called Hivondrona, (and in some maps marked Ivondro,) though Hivondrona is more properly the name of the river only, which proceeding from the interior of the country, falls into the sea at the distance of about two hundred yards from the village. Anjolokefa was the residence of the enterprising chieftain Fisatra, otherwise called Fische, or Fish. He held in subjection to himself all the inhabitants of the Betanimena, Tamatave, and Mahavelona provinces. This village was at that time the principal place on the coast. His very name was a terror even through the province of Ankay, (west of Betanimena,) the eastern part of which he conquered. He was at length murdered by a party from the interior, who contemplated in his death the ruin also of his brother and ally, John Réné, of Tamatave.* In this they failed: John Réné lived to inflict terrible vengeance on the murderers of his relative. A son of Fisatra, named Berora, intended to succeed to his father's possessions, was placed for some time under the care of the Rev. D. Jones, on the commencement of the missionary efforts of the latter at Tamatave, but was shortly afterwards taken from the island, and conveyed to Paris for education, where he lately died. What political views the French government may have had in this measure, remain yet to be developed in the future connexions France may form with Madagascar.

To the west of Hivondrona is a fine cataract called Ifito; inferior, however, to some in the Betanimena country;

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* Réné was chieftain of Tamatave; Radama formed with him the alliance of brotherhood, agreeably to the custom of the country, called *Fatidra,* and described in Chapter VII. of the present volume.

and in the division called Ivoloina, there are two immense caverns.

Betanimena, the sixth, is the province adjoining Tamatave to the south, separated from it by Tany-fotsy, and stretching about thirty-five leagues along the coast. The name of the province signifies " much red earth," and, no doubt was given from the reddish ferruginous appearance of the soil. There are several extensive lakes in this district, and two cataracts, Tahaviara, and Iandrianahomby, deserving the notice of travellers. The country is flat near the sea, hilly in the interior, and mountainous towards the north. It is in many parts marshy, and covered with thickets and forests. The soil for some distance from the coast is sandy; but for the most part productive, from the abundance of decomposed vegetable matter which it contains. The population is numerous. At Ambohibohazo, the capital of the province, the soil is rich, and the scenery diversified and beautiful.

In the neighbourhood of Ambohibohazo, Mr. Hastie selected a spot of ground for a plantation of mulberries. They succeed well, and might be cultivated to an indefinite extent for silkworms. Some good silk has already been produced in Madagascar; and this valuable commodity may hereafter become an article of great importance to the island. Mr. Hastie intended to form a sugar plantation in the same neighbourhood, for which the soil appeared well adapted. Labour being extremely cheap, there was every prospect that the establishment would have succeeded. But his lamented decease, and subsequently that of Radama, have suspended every plan of the kind then in contemplation, and have shewn, most distinctly, the extent and beneficial influence each exerted over the people, while they exhibit in an affecting light the degree to which a single individual may promote, or his removal retard, the improvement of a nation. There is abundance of grazing-land in the same part of the province; and numerous herds of cattle, belonging to the sovereign, and to the traders on the coast, are usually taken there for some time previously to their exportation. It is also from this part of the country that "maromita," usually called by Europeans "marmittes," (coolies or bearers,) are generally obtained, for conveying travellers and their luggage, or merchandise, from the coast to the capital, or other parts of the interior.

This district has also been famous for its jiolahy, or brigands. They have concealed themselves in the recesses of its almost impenetrable forests and thickets, or extensive and generally unknown caverns; whence suddenly rushing forth on passengers and bearers of burdens, they have committed with impunity extensive depredations, not unfrequently adding murder to their robberies.

Vatomandry is a small port in this province, but has scarcely any trade. At Tany-fotsy an important junction between two extensive lakes was commenced by Radama, in order to facilitate communications with the interior by means of water-carriage.

Anteva, the seventh province, lies to the south of Betanimena, which it resembles in general appearance, though it is rather more hilly. Rice is grown in this province in great abundance, and quantities of beef are salted here for exportation, though the inhabitants are extremely poor.

The great cause of the poverty of this part of the island, is, the love of ardent spirits prevalent among the people. After toiling to obtain a crop of rice, the natives will sometimes sell the whole for a small quantity of arrack, imported by traders from Mauritius and Bourbon. With the deleterious drug thus heartlessly given in return for the produce of their labour, the natives soon become intoxicated, in which humiliating state they continue so long as the arrack lasts: for this short-lived indulgence, they sink into a state of the most abject penury and misery, and then force themselves and their families to subsist the greater part of the year on roots, &c. found in the woods and swamps. Their chief means of subsistence is the via, a species of arum, the root of which is tuberous or cylindrical, and frequently from ten to twelve inches in diameter. It is dressed by baking for about twelve hours in an oven of heated stones under ground, after the manner of the South Sea islanders. In this state it will keep good for three or four days, but is cut into small pieces and dried in the sun, when intended to be kept for a longer period.

In payment for the carriage of goods into the interior, or for their produce, the intoxicating draught is the usual equivalent: to diminish, and if possible prevent, the wretchedness thus induced, Radama imposed a heavy duty on the importation of ardent spirits. Some check on such an improvident and destructive infatuation in the one party, and of relentless avarice in the other, was required; but there is great reason to fear that the baneful habit is too deeply fixed among the unthinking natives of this part of the coast, to be very easily extirpated; but the attempt of Radama to diminish the evil, is only one among many instances of the soundness of his judgment and the beneficial tendency of his measures. There are three important ports in this province: Manoro, Mahela, and Mananjary. A considerable trade is carried on at these places, especially at Mananjary, by French settlers.

The eighth, the province of *Mātitānana*, lies south of Anteva, and has for a length of time been the principal settlement of the Arabs, on the east coast of Madagascar.*

Mātitānana is also famous for a class of persons called by some writers Ombiasses, but more correctly Mpiasa, which signifies "workers." They appear to resemble the Mpisikidy, Mpanandro, and Mpanao·ody of the interior, whose profession is to work the sikidy, or divination, to calculate days, foretell fortunes, as well as to prepare medicines and charms. It has been conjectured that most of the superstitions in the island have had their origin in this province.

Madagascar is the land of ody, or charms, and in this district they triumph in all their melancholy glory.

The country in general is flat, but fertile; rice, sugar-cane, and cattle abound.

Vangaidrano, the ninth, or as sometimes called, Taisaka, joins the south of Mātitānana. Here very little advancement has yet been made, or even attempted in civilization, yet the population is considerable.

The Manabatra with seven mouths, and the Mantangy with four, are the two principal rivers in this province.† The Malagasy fever, which prevails more or less along the whole coast of the island, is very general, and to strangers often fatal, on the coast of this province. The country is flat and marshy. There are also extensive and almost impervious forests, where vegetation is rank, and the free circulation of the air intercepted by thick underwood. The productions are much the same as in the provinces already described, though little is attempted by the natives beyond the cultivation of a supply adequate to their immediate wants.

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* The doctrines and precepts of Mahomet have obtained some influence here. The Arabic writing is also used, and paper of a very coarse quality is said to be manufactured.

† Marked in the map, accompanying Rochon's work, Mananghera, and Manartengha.

Anosy, the tenth, is south of Vangaidrano, and on some accounts is one of the most important provinces, in the history of Madagascar. It has been the site of the most extensive French establishments; and the principal efforts of the Catholic missionaries in Madagascar have been put forth here. In Anosy also is situated the most fertile and beautiful vale in the island, the vale of Ambolo. The country is populous, and the soil extremely fertile. Rice and manioc, sugarcane and coffee, are abundant. Its extensive marshes render it, however, like the greater part of the lower portions of the island, extremely insalubrious.

There are in this province several rivers, and in the northern part of Anosy is the bay of St. Lucia, called by the natives Mangafiafy. Ten leagues south of St. Lucia, is the peninsula in which Fort Dauphin stands; the earliest French settlement in the island. The peninsula is called Taolanara, or, as sometimes written, Tholangari. Fort Dauphin is in lat. 25° 5′ S. and long. 46° 35′ E.

The shores are often bold and steep; and the cliffs appear composed of strata of limestone, of varied thicknesses. Rock-salt and saltpetre are found in this province. In fact, next to the Betsileo country, of which we shall have occasion to speak presently, Anosy may be considered the finest province in the island—the most beautiful and the most productive. Of the rich vale of Ambolo, mention has been already made. In this charming valley, not only the usual produce of the island, but cloves and other spices, with citrons of various kinds, may be obtained. Hot springs, reported to possess valuable medicinal qualities, are also found there. It was, perhaps, from this fertile spot, that Monsieur de Modave drew materials for his too flattering memoirs of the island of Madagascar.

The next province is the eleventh, *Androy*, separated by the river Mahafaly from Anosy. Of this and the adjoining provinces, (twenty-first and twenty-second,) Mahafaly and Fiarenana, there is, perhaps, little to be said. Scarcely any advancement has been made in the civilization of their inhabitants, excepting in this one important circumstance, that the chiefs of the two latter provinces, in voluntarily submitting to Radama, agreed to his propositions on the subject of the suppression of the slave-trade in Madagascar. The country is woody, and the population small. Wild cattle abound. Salt and nitre are found in Mahafaly and Fiarenana. Tolia Bay and St. Augustine Bay are situated in the province of Fiarenana; it is to this part of the country that Drury's notice of Madagascar principally refers; and there also the Winterton was lost in August 1792.* The ship was wrecked in the district of the bay of St. Augustine, about fifteen or twenty miles from Tolia. The soil in the neighbourhood of Tolia is sandy and unproductive, but improving towards the bay of St. Augustine.

Before proceeding to the next great division of the western coast, it may be proper to remark, that there are two inland provinces lying between Mahafaly and Fiarenana on the west, and Anosy on the east:—the twelfth, called *Tsienimbalala;* and the thirteenth, *Ibara;* the former to the south, bordering on Androy; the latter to the north, joining the Betsileo country. Of these, however, little more can be said than respecting the western provinces, to which they are contiguous. They have never been carefully explored, either by natives or foreigners. It is known that they are but thinly peopled. The country is woody, and a very inconsiderable portion of it is brought under cultivation. The inhabitants have obtained from the adjoining maritime provinces, supplies of arms and ammunition, and their acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the Hovas appears the effect of compulsion rather than of cordiality. They possess great numbers of cattle, which they dispose of on the coast, in exchange for ammunition and arms.

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* Loss of the Winterton pp. 13—18.

Immediately to the north of Ibara, is the province of *Betsileo*—the fourteenth. The name signifies "much, not conquered," or "invincible," and denotes the independent and unconquered spirit of the inhabitants. It is separated from Ankova by a range of mountains called Ankaratra, and from Anteva by an extensive waste or desert. Betsileo is a fine grazing country. The cattle are exceedingly numerous, and among them some are found, called "omby bory," cattle without horns. The account given by some authors, of cattle in Madagascar having horns appended to the forehead by means of a small portion of skin, appears fabulous. Such cattle are not *now* known in the island, and it is believed never were.

The inhabitants of the Betsileo province, though not equally advanced in civilization with the people of Ankova, who have had more intercourse with Europeans, are remarkable for the mildness of their dispositions, and the simplicity of their manners. Living in an inland province, and having had scarcely any communication with strangers visiting the island or settling on the coast, they naturally express the utmost surprise at the appearance, manners, and pursuits of the foreigners, when they meet with any of these, to them, singular and extraordinary beings.

Generally speaking, the Betsileo lead an inactive life. The principal domestic occupation of the people consists in the manufacture of the native lamba, or long robe, from a kind of coarse silk, the produce of the country, which they render extremely heavy by ornamenting with an immense quantity of small leaden beads fastened to the silk in rows either straight or curved. They purchase the metal on the coast, or in the interior, and make the beads themselves. Their land is fertile, and, with but trifling labour, yields an ample supply for the few wants with which they are familiar; and to exert themselves beyond this, in their present grade of civilization, would be contrary to the known laws and history of the human species.

Betsileo is divided into six districts,—three in the north, and an equal number in the south. The former, which are situated nearly in the centre of the island, are Andrasay, or Vakinankaratra, Fisakanana, and Vohidrahomby. To the south, are Lalongina, Sandrabé, and Tsianipariha. The scenery of the country is not unfrequently rich and varied, occasionally it is picturesque, and sometimes bold and majestic; and the indications of former volcanic action are distinct and numerous.

To the west of Betsileo, and proceeding northward on the sea-coast, is the fifteenth province, the large country of *Menabe*, otherwise designated the South Sakalava country. This district has from time immemorial been renowned for the brave and warlike chieftains by whom its inhabitants have been governed.

The prevalence of wars in former times, among the Sakalavas, together with the fatal effects of the fever abounding in this district, may sufficiently account for the fact, that, though the aggregate population is considerable, it is yet small compared with the amount the Sakalava country is capable of maintaining. The cultivated part of the province is large; other portions yet remain desert. Various esculent roots are cultivated by the Sakalavas, especially arrow-root. The tamarind is abundant, and several fruits but little known in the island. Cattle, though still abundant, are not so numerous as formerly, owing chiefly to the destructive and predatory nature of their wars.

On the borders of this province, between Menabe and Ankova, is a large tract of country occupied by herds of cattle in the wild state; many of them are distinguished from other cattle in Madagascar, by not having the "tafona," or hump on the back. To hunt these animals, was a favourite amusement of Radama. The spot usually chosen for the feat, is called Manerinerina.

The fine and extensive vale of Belisa is situated in this province, running in a direction north and south. It is watered by three considerable rivers, the Imania, the Manambolo, and the Manambala. There is also an extensive lake of the same name as the first river mentioned, Imania, famed for having near its centre a beautiful and picturesque islet called Anosisaka. This is adorned with a remarkably fine natural grove, rendering it an attractive object, in the scenery of which it is so distinguished an ornament.

North of the Sakalava country is, sixteenth, *Ambongo* having a considerable extent of sea-coast, and being for the most part, a level and woody district. The country resembles that of the Sakalavas, but its inhabitants are less civilized; they may, perhaps, be termed barbarous. In more than one instance, cruelty has been shown to foreigners who have been unfortunately shipwrecked on this part of the coast. A case of this kind occurred a few years ago, when a Portuguese whaler being cast on this part of the island, the crew were all murdered.

Ambongo is the only province in Madagascar, whose inhabitants did not, more or less, acknowledge the sovereignty of Radama, and whom he had not attempted to reduce to subjection.

The principal rivers here are, the Manambaho, the Sambaho, and Iantsanira, which last falls into the sea south of Cape St. Andrew. The province is separated from Iboina by the river Mangaray.

Seventeenth, *Iboina*, lies north of Ambongo. This province is also level and woody. It abounds in marshes, and hence also in fevers. The population is considerable, and the soil is generally productive. Cattle is very numerous. The chief river here is the Betsiboka, which runs into the sea near Mojanga. Near this is the small village of Bombitoka. This name seems to be a corruption of the Malagasy *Vohim-be toaka*, i. e. "the village of much spirituous liquor." The Arabs have long been accustomed to visit this place, and many of them reside here for the purposes of trade; they are called by the Malagasy, Talaotra.

To the east of Iboina lies Vohimarina, which has been already described. The Betsileo country has been spoken of as south of Ankova; that to the north, the eighteenth province, is called *Antsianaka*.* This is an extensive tract of country, abounding with large herds of cattle. Sheep, as well as bullocks, are numerous here. Rice is not largely cultivated, but the finest cotton in the island is produced in this province, and its cultivation might be greatly increased, as the soil appears well adapted to its growth. Great quantities are sold in the markets in the raw state, and afterwards manufactured by the natives into dresses. Their process is slow and tedious, but the cloth manufactured is firm and durable. The country, though large, is not populous, and is also far from being healthy; a Malagasy fever prevails extensively. The houses are mere huts, and generally excessively dirty. Very little has yet been attempted for the civilization or improvement of the inhabitants of this part of the island.

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* Literally the name signifies, "The province of not children," i. e. not subject to others—independent.

The high road to Tananarivo from Mahavelona, in which Foule Pointe is situated, lies through the province of Antsianaka. The province is intersected by a part of the great forest of Alamazaotra. There is also a beautiful lake in this province, called Anosy, having an island in its centre, and a village occupying the highest part of the island.

The province of *Ankay*, the nineteenth, lies to the south of Antsianaka, and to the west of Ankova. It is a narrow strip of the interior of the country, and is sometimes called Antankay. Its inhabitants are called Bezānozāno; a people of independent spirit, and formerly among the most turbulent and anarchical in the island; *anarchical* is, in fact, the signification of the name Bezānozāno. The inhabitants are not numerous, and the villages are small. Cattle and poultry are abundant; rice is largely cultivated. The people are, however, generally poor and dirty, and much addicted to divination and idols. The dialect spoken, like that of Antsianaka, being strongly nasal, resembles that of the coast more than that of the adjoining inland province of Ankova.

The scenery of many parts of Ankay is extremely beautiful and picturesque. The province consists principally of an extensive plain, situated between lofty hills, and watered by the fine river Mangoro, which runs eastward to Anteva. West of this river is a mountain called Ifody, covered for the most part with a forest: it commands an extensive view of the country north and south. A beautiful wood resembling mahogany, called mango wood, and excellent for cabinet work, is found here, though not known to exist elsewhere in the island. The river Mangoro, from its direction and magnitude, would be well adapted for the conveyance of merchandise between the coast and the interior of the island, but for its numerous and rapid falls, which in some places may be considered cataracts; and, though not so large as to deserve notice as objects of curiosity or surprise, render the currents too impetuous for the purposes of navigation.

The only province remaining to be noticed is *Ankova.* But as this province is the country of the present rulers of the island, the site of the capital, the seat of the government, as well as having been the principal and almost exclusive scene of the labours of the Protestant Mission in the island, a more detailed account is required of this central part of the island.

CHAP. IV.

Province of Ankova—Meaning of the name—The chief divisions of the province, Imerina—Its general aspect—Elevation of its mountains—Relics of antiquity—Objects of superstitious veneration—Salubrity of Ankova—Produce of the country—Subdivisions or clans, Voro-mahery, Imamo, Vonizongo—Tomb of Rapeto—Peculiarities of the inhabitants of Ankova — Account of Tananarivo, the capital of the island — Its geographical situation—Its elevation above the level of the sea—Import of the name—Population of Tananarivo—Dwellings of the people—Construction of their houses—Divisions in the capital—Public thoroughfares—The palace—The silver house—The throne of the kingdom—Site of the tombs of the reigning family — Antsahatsiroa, place of public assembly—The Tarpeian rock of Tananarivo—The several places of execution—Market—Central school and chapel — Mission buildings—Burial-ground for strangers—Country residences of the king—State of the public roads—Remains of ancient fortifications.

Ankova,* the country or province of the Hovas, is the most important province in the island of Madagascar. Its inhabitants are more numerous, industrious, ingenious, and wealthy, than those of any other part of the country. It is the centre of the empire, the seat of the government, and the scene of the principal efforts hitherto made in the country, to introduce education, European improvements, arts and sciences, and to promote civilization. Its climate is the most salubrious in the island, and its soil, though to a great extent still untilled, has yet been brought under sufficient improvement and culture, to maintain a large population.

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* Ankova is a compound word, formed of *Any* and *Hova*. *Any* is an adverb of place, signifying *there*, and a preposition signifying *at*. In composition, the final y is dropped. Hova is the name of the people. It is sometimes spelt without the h, as Ova; but more correctly with the h, breathed very softly. It is changed into k, in composition, after n, *gratia euphoniæ*, An-kova, for Any-hova—there, at the place of the Hovas, the country of the Hovas.

From its extreme want of wood, the general appearance of Ankova is sterile, dreary, and uninteresting. The eye is fatigued with traversing its numerous hills and mountains in search of vegetation, as a relief from the dulness of the unvarying scene, which a country, generally destitute of brushwood, grove, or forest, presents. In the rainy, which is also the warm season, vegetation is extremely rapid; the valleys, carpeted with the loveliest green, are then rich in luxuriant verdure, and even the ferruginous tops of the mountains, and the rounded summits of the thousand hills, clothed for a few months in the year with a coarse and dwarfish grass, assume an aspect of comparative cheerfulness. But in the dry, which is also the cold and wintry season, the appearance of the whole country, excepting the meadows, and a few spots artificially irrigated, is exceedingly barren.

Ankova is divided into three chief parts or divisions; viz. Imerina, Imamo, and Vonizongo. Imerina gave name originally to the kingdom of Radama, and hence he has sometimes been spoken of as prince of Imērina, chieftain of Emerne,* king of the Hovas, &c. Imamo and Vonizongo, were annexed to the district of Imerina during the reign of the father of Radama, and have ever since composed the kingdom of Ankova.

In its external characteristics, the great part of Ankova may be considered hilly, rather than mountainous. Few of its highest mountains rise above five or six hundred feet above the level of the surrounding rice grounds. The capital itself, Tananarivo, is situated on the summit of a long irregular hill, about five hundred feet high. The principal mountains in the three divisions of Ankova, are, Angavo to the east, Ankaratra to the south, Ambohimiangara to the west, and Andringitra to the north, chiefly distinguished as the scene of legendary tales, recounting the mighty achievements of giants, and other monstrous beings, supposed to belong to a fabulous age. The altars erected by former generations on the summits of these mountains, to the memory of such extraordinary personages, still exist, and are visited by the people as the appropriate places for prayer and sacrifice to the manes of the mighty dead. On the tops of some of these mountains, are still existing the vestiges of ancient villages.

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* Emirne is the usual, but certainly incorrect, orthography, employed by French writers.

Altars are also met with throughout the whole of Ankova, and frequently the sites chosen for them are high places and groves. The usual name for these is, Vazimba, i. e. altars raised to the Vazimba, the supposed aborigines of the central parts of the island.

Ankova, àlthough it has few trees to improve or diversify its appearance, excepting the wild fig, which is met with in most of the villages, is bounded by forests to the north and east; the former separating the province from Antsianaka, and the latter from Ankay. To its being thus clear of wood, and its consequently favouring the free circulation of the air, may in part be attributed the salubrity of Ankova, and the north of Betsileo, called Văkin-ankaratra, for here the Malagasy fever is as much an exotic, as it is indigenous almost every where else.

The valleys and low grounds are principally used for the cultivation of rice: bogs and marshes, which are too swampy for the growth of rice, are planted with rushes; a valuable production to the cultivator, being in extensive demand for thatching, making baskets, matting, hats, fuel, &c. The higher level grounds, and the sides of the hills, where the ascent is not so steep as to expose the soil to the liability of being washed away in the rainy season, are planted with manioc, sweet potatoes, gourds, sugarcane, beans, &c.

The Ikiopa is the finest river within a great distance of the Capital, which at unequal distances it almost surrounds. It rises in the east, runs southward, bearing to the west, where several tributary streams from the Ankaratra range augment its waters; continuing its course, it at length falls into the Betsiboka, which, as already remarked, flows into the sea on the north-west coast of Madagascar, not far from Mananjary. This river waters the fine vale of Betsimitatatra, which lies to the west of the capital. The vale itself reaches from thirty to forty miles, in a direction from north to south, varying in width from half a mile to four miles. It is, however, impossible, merely by specifying its length and width, to convey an accurate idea of the form or beauty of the Betsimitatatra vale. Its rich productions throughout its whole exent, its irregular outline, terminated by innumerable rising grounds and gently-sloping hills, covered with villages, or adorned with cultivation, continually present to the traveller new and varying scenes of tranquillity and loveliness. In the rainy season especially, Betsimitatatra, viewed from the capital, presents the most charming and delightful scenery. It is extensively cultivated, and the beautiful green of the rice plantations, in the early part of the season, is not surpassed by the finest herbage of the European landscape.

The principal lake in Ankova is Itasy, or, as called by the natives, Itasianaka. It is situated in the division of Imamo, and at the foot of the high mountain of Ambohimiangara. The principal cataract is Farahantsana, in the division of Marovatana, and about thirty-five miles from the capital.

The almost total absence of wood in Ankova, not only affects the appearance of the country, but renders fuel scarce and dear. By those who reside near the forests on the borders of the province, fuel is easily obtained; and considerable quantities of fagots are carried for sale to the markets of Ankova. Slaves are also employed by their owners in fetching wood from the forests. But among the poor, almost the only fuel used consists of bozaka, or long grass; roots of grass, plucked up in the dry season; rice-straw with the chaff and husks; weeds collected from the gardens and rice-grounds, the stalk of the manioc; refuse from the thatching,* chips of wood, and great quantities of dried cow-dung.

In most of the villages there are a few trees, and from these the privileged "head-men" obtain part of their fuel; but none may be sold, nor may others venture to put sacrilegious hands on these guarded favourites of the vegetable empire: otherwise, with such eagerness would they be seized, that in a very short time not a twig or a stump would remain.

Imerina consists of four smaller subdivisions; namely, Avaradrano, Vakinisisaona, Marovatana, and Ambodirano.

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* Thatching made of reeds has an extremely rough and unsightly appearance till dressed and clipped. This the native thatchers perform with much dexterity; and they, as well as the carpenters in their work, claim all that is cut off as a perquisite of indefeasible right; though not unfrequently they are found to cut and clip more than is meet, and rather for their own advantage than for the benefit of house or landlord.

These constituted originally four distinct and independent kingdoms, or petty states, governed by their own chieftains, but were united into one by Andriamasinavalona. At his death, the whole was again divided into four parts, as he had allotted one-fourth of his kingdom to each of his sons, whom he nominated to their respective shares of territory prior to his decease. By the father of Radama, these four subdivisions were again consolidated into the kingdom of Imerina.

These lesser subdivisions of Imerina are again subdivided. Avaradrano contains, for example, 1. Voro-mahēry; that is, "the powerful bird;" meaning the eagle, or perhaps, more properly, the vulture: 2. Tsimahafotsy; "not turning pale"—courageous: 3. Tsimihamboholahy; "not turning the back"—undaunted: 4. Mandiavato; "treading on stones"—firm, resolute, &c. For the sake of illustrating the nature of this smaller subdivision, we may take the first-mentioned, Avaradrano, especially as it also contains the capital. Avaradrano is the name of a certain portion of country, a given district, and signifies, literally, "north of the water:" the names of the subdivisions above-mentioned, as belonging to Avaradrano, refer rather to clans and divisions of people, than to place.

The divisions are extremely numerous and intricate, involving not merely divisions of soil, but classifications of people and families; and it not unfrequently occurs that the same is applied both to place and people, though perhaps, as a general rule, it may be remarked, that names of villages belong to them strictly as such, but names of districts involve primarily the idea of clans, families, or classes of people. Sometimes the same clan occupies a portion of soil in different districts, and sometimes a district is designated by the name of the principal class or clan to which it originally belonged.*

To illustrate this view of the subject, it may be inquired with regard to its locality, "Where is the capital situated?" and the reply may be, "In Voromahery." "Where is Voromahery?" "In Avaradrano." Here, Voromahery, though strictly an heraldic designation and therefore belonging to a clan, is yet attached to a place, as a portion of the territory called Avaradrano. In other cases it designates necessarily the clan: for example, "Who are summoned to attend such a kabary, or public assembly?" It may be answered, "All Voromahery;" that is, all the people falling under that heraldic designation, whether residing in Avaradrano or any other district. Or it might be asked, "Who are ordered to the forest for timber for such a service?" and the reply may be, "All Avaradrano;" and in that case all the clans belonging to Avaradrano would be intended.

These divisions and subdivisions are most tenaciously and rigorously maintained by the people themselves, and by the government. Proportions of public service to be performed by the people, are most scrupulously regulated by reference to these divisions. Quotas of men to be furnished for the army, and of youth for the schools, are fixed on by the government agreeably to the arrangement of the people into clans; a mode of proceeding, however, frequently involving great inconvenience, and which must, as civilization advances, ultimately fall into desuetude. It might be adapted to the feudal state of Madagascar, when the island was split into innumerable petty and independent states; but it is unsuitable for an empire, which requires its services rather by convenience of localities than the prejudice of clans or families.

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* This custom does not appear to be peculiar to the Malagasy. In the South Sea Islands the same designation is used for the clans or tribes and the country which they inhabit, although primarily employed to designate the people only.

The capital and its suburbs, for about six miles round, are called Vōromahēry, though more strictly the capital is called "Voromahery in town," and the suburbs "Voromahery in the country."

Most of the preceding observations, though properly belonging to Imerina, may yet be applied to Ankova generally, since a great similarity obtains between its three great divisions. It will, therefore, be necessary to subjoin but a few remarks respecting Imamo and Vonizōngo, and these on points only where the two divisions differ from Imerina.

Imamo lies to the west of Imerina, and embraces Māndridrāno, and Valala-fotsy. Abundance of iron is found in the mountain of Ambōhimīangāra, one of the highest in Ankova. It has been said that silver also exists there; but of this, no satisfactory evidence has yet been given. One of the most celebrated vestiges of antiquity in Imamo, is situated on the summit of this mountain. It is the ancient tomb of the renowned giant Rapēto. An altar is connected with the tomb, on which sacrifices are still offered.

The tradition respecting these renowned personages states, that Rapeto came from the mountain Ankāratra, and Rasoalao from Ambōhimanōa. They made immense bonfires, and gradually approached each other, till they met at Antōngona, where they entered into a mutual covenant, and married. Their children consisted of one daughter and seven sons. The sons were laudably inured to industry, and sent to plant rice, but very impertinently took upon themselves to order their sister to fetch their Sărotra, (the Malagasy umbrella, a rude sort of mat-covering.) The parents were indignant, and reproved the youths, on their return home, for imposing so menial a task on their sister—their only sister. They even took them by the shoulders, and denounced anathemas on them, and solemnly charged the daughter never to carry anything, nor plant anything, except rice—not even the manioc, nor sweet potato; that, if ordered to do it, she must peremptorily refuse, and that the "boys" must do all labour of that kind.

A clan exists to the present day in Ambōdirăno, calling themselves Zanak'antitra, *i.e.*, old children, meaning made old by toil and labour. They consider themselves the descendants of this giant family, and their females still adhere to the ancient interdict, never carrying nor planting anything but the ketsa, rice-plants.

The powers of Rapeto were of the most marvellous kind. He could, it is said, fetch anything from the farthest extremities of the earth, and could even, at a stretch, reach the sky. One single step of his, would be equal to the dsitance of six days' journey by an ordinary man. When visited by strangers, he conversed freely with them, and, without moving from his seat, would merely stretch out his hand, and procure abundance of fowls, sheep, and bullocks. With the same means he would bring an ample supply of fuel from the forest, to dress the provisions for his guests. Wishing occasionally for a few dainties at his table, he produced the beautiful and extensive lake Itasy, which abounds to this day with excellent fish: a village to the west of Tarinarivo still retains his name.

On one unfortunate occasion he had a serious quarrel with the moon, with whom he fought, but, notwithstanding his gigantic formation and strength, he was vanquished and slain. He was buried on the summit of the high mountain of Ambohi-miangara, near the lake Itasy. At his grave an altar is erected, and thither the people occasionally resort to pray and offer sacrifices.

His wife, Rasoalao, is regarded as the owner of the wild cattle. Her grave is unknown. She is, however, prayed to; and, unless thus worshipped with sacrifices, the people imagine they could neither obtain bullocks nor sheep, nor success in any journey they might undertake.

To the south of this mountain is the large and valuable lake Itasy, referred to in the preceding fable, into which the Mātindrāno, a river flowing from the east, empties itself. Two rivers from the south fall also into this lake; the Fitandāmbo, and the Varāhina. The Lily runs out of it, westward, and proceeds to Sakay.

The general appearance of Imamo is not inviting. It is hilly, but with extensive pieces of level ground, and fertile valleys. In order to secure good pasture-land for the cattle, the inhabitants burn the grass which grows luxuriantly on the sides of the hills. They set fire to this about the close of the dry season; at which season of the year, the fires may be seen at an immense distance illuminating the horizon in a most splendid manner, for many miles in extent. As soon as the rains fall, the young and tender grass springs up, and a fine rich pasture is provided.

Vonizongo is a district renowned for having contained an unusual number of petty chieftains and nobles. These have generally claimed exemption from some particular kinds of service, such as digging with the spade, fetching wood from the forests, assisting in building houses for the sovereign, &c. A number of these were chosen a few years since, by Radama, to assist in cultivating some land at Foule Pointe, where he formed a colony; and on the service being declined by them, as incompatible with their dignity, Radama yielded the point, but still availed himself of their labours, by ordering, that as carrying a spade would be derogatory to their dignity, carrying a musket could not, and that they must, therefore, honourably serve with the army in his wars. The inhabitants of the district of Vonizongo are distinguished for their attachment to charms and idols. During the year 1828, three of the natives of this district were put to death, for making the ody mahery—the powerful medicine, or spell; in other words, for being sorcerers.

Vonizongo has no extensive valleys, but numerous small fertile spots between the hills, where large quantities of rice are grown.

This district, like other parts of the island, consists of numerous subdivisions: its four principal towns are, Soavina, Fihaonana, Fiambazana, and Fiarenana. Its highest mountain is called Angavo, i. e. the lofty.

The chief point of attraction, and the most important object in the province of Ankova, is the capital; to an account of which the remainder of this chapter will not be unsuitably appropriated.

Tananarivo, the capital of Imerina, and now of Madagascar, stands on the summit of a lofty, long, and irregular hill; it commands an extensive prospect of the surrounding country, and of not fewer, perhaps, than a hundred smaller towns and villages. The geographical position of Tananarivo* is, according to the observations of Mr. Lyall,

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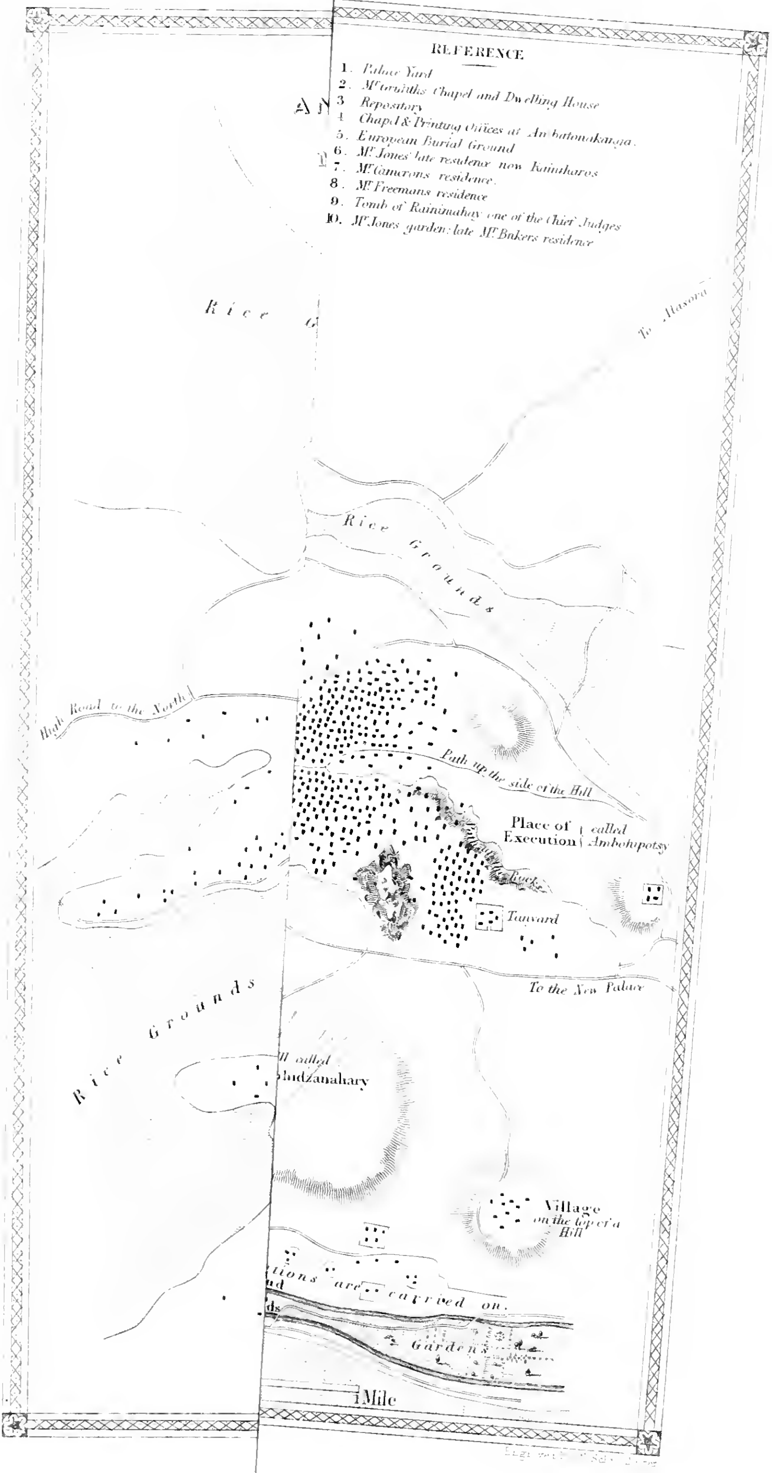
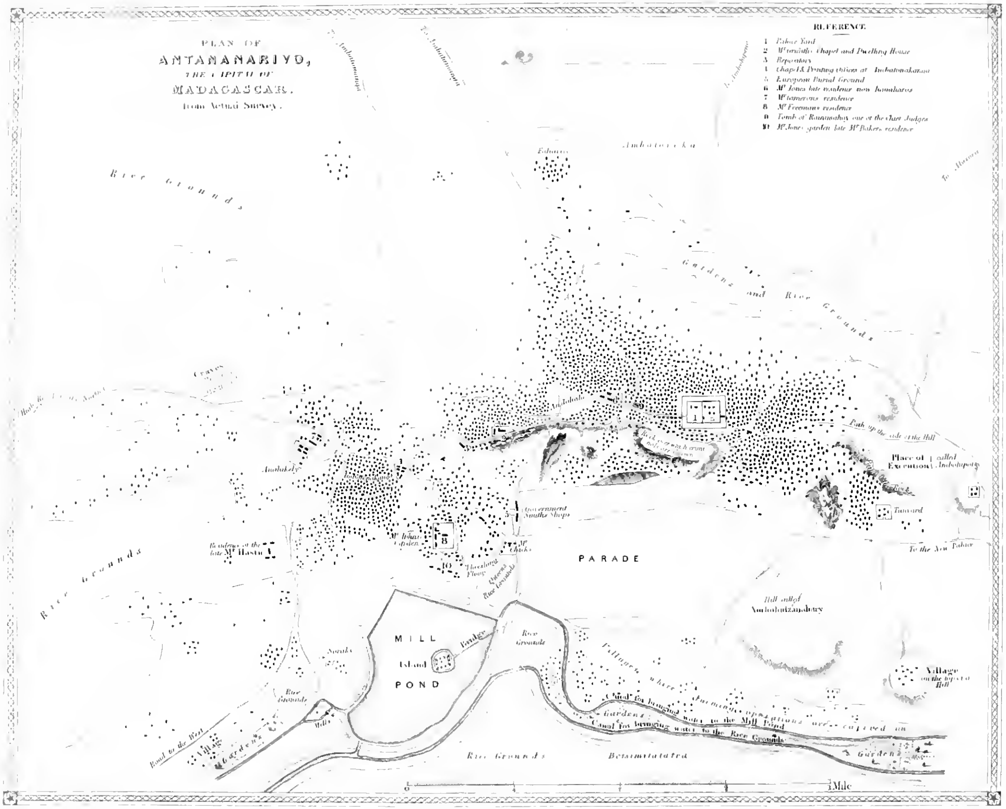
* This is the name by which the capital is generally designated, though in writing it, the most intelligent among the natives add the formative prefix *An*—at, there: but in speaking they do not pronounce the *An*, which seems to stand in a relation to the name of the capital similar to that of the


REFERENCE
1. Palace Yard
2. Mr. Griffiths Chapel and Dwelling House
3. Repository
4. Chapel & Printing Offices at Ambatonakanga.
5. European Burial Ground
6. Mr. Jones' late residence now Rainiharos
7. Mr. Camerons residence.
8. Mr. Freemans residence
9. Tomb of Rainimahay one of the Chief Judges
10. Mr. Jones garden: late Mr. Bakers residence
A N
Rice G
To Alasora
Rice Grounds
High Road to the North
Path up the side of the Hill
Place of Execution called Ambohipotsy
Rocks
Tanyard
To the New Palace
Rice Grounds
ill called
Ambohidzanahary
Village on the top of a Hill
tions are carried on.
nd
ds
Gardens
1 Mile


PLAN OF
ANTANANARIVO,
THE CAPITAL OF
MADAGASCAR.
from Actual Survey.
REFERENCE.
1 Palace Yard
2 Mr Griffiths Chapel and Dwelling House
3 Repository
4 Chapel & Printing Offices at Ambatonakanga
5 European Burial Ground
6 Mr Jones late residence now
7 Mr Camerons residence
8 Mr Freemans residence
9 Tomb of one of the Chief Judges
10 Mr Jones garden late Mr Bakers residence
Ambatovinaky
Rice Grounds
Gardens and Rice Grounds
Graves
Andohalo
Andohalo
Place of Execution called Ampahamarinana
Rock
Path up the side of the Hill
Tamarind
To the New Palace
Government Smiths Shops
PARADE
Mr Johns Garden
Residence of the late Mr Hastie
Threshing Floor
Queens Rice Grounds
Hill called Andohalo
MILL
Island
Bridge
POND
Rice Grounds
Marsh
Mills
Road to the West
Village
Gardens
Villages where the various operations are carried on
Canal for bringing water to the Mill Pond
Gardens
Canal for bringing water to the Rice Grounds
Gardens
Rice Grounds
Betsimitatatra
Village on the top of a Hill
0
1 Mile

the late British resident at the capital of the island—lat. 18° 56′ 26″ S., and 47° 57′ 48″ E. of Greenwich, or 45° 37′ 22″ E. of Paris. The highest elevation of Tananarivo above the adjoining vale, is about five hundred feet. Its elevation above the level of the sea, is believed to be about seven thousand feet. The direction of the hill is nearly north-west and south-east. The two principal paths to its summit, wind up in an extremely irregular manner; one from the east to the centre of the town, and another from the north, proceeding through the town to its southern extremity.

The signification of the name Tananarivo is determined by its etymology. Arīvo, signifies a thousand; tanana, means a town. The compound word will therefore signify a thousand towns. It may be regarded as a name given in compliment to the extensive population thus drawn together; and, viewed as descriptive of a native's idea of a town—so large as to comprehend a thousand towns in one. This appears to be the correct interpretation of the term. The European, who smiles, it may be, at the childish exaggeration, will yet forgive the fond vanity of the Malagasy, who thinks as proudly of *his* City of a thousand towns, as ever did the inhabitants of Palmyra or Babylon, Corinth or Rome, in their dreams of the pomp, splendour, and durability of *their* immortal cities.

The summit and the sides of the hill, on which the city stands, are covered with buildings, especially near the top. The houses are built on the declivities by means of artificially levelled terraces, of twenty, thirty, or forty feet in width.

O before Tahiti, or before the largest of the Sandwich Islands. In the geographic position of the capital, as given above, the Missionaries suppose there is an error of one degree, and that it should be 48° 57′ 48″ east of Greenwich.

formed one above another. A principal thoroughfare, or road, divides the town east and west; out of which branch innumerable small pathways, leading between the houses, where, however, room is scarcely left in some places for two foot-passengers to pass; and even that little can only be obtained with difficulty, perhaps by means of enormous stones jutting out of a bank, amidst hollows caused by incessant torrents of rain, or across some mass of rock projecting over a frightful precipice beneath. The nature of the ground on which the city stands precludes the possibility of regularity in the formation of the streets or the disposition of the buildings.

The principal houses in the capital are built of wood, and are sometimes substantial and durable. The chief entrance always faces the west. The threshold of the door being often raised eighteen inches or two feet above the level of the pathway, a block of stone is placed outside the door as a step, and another inside to assist in reaching the floor. The houses are detached, and generally surrounded by a low mud wall. The fronts of several comparatively new houses are screened by verandas, and a few of recent construction, belonging to the officers of government, have boarded floors. In general, a coarse and strong matting, spread on the earth, constitutes the bed, table, and floor of the inhabitants.

In building a house, the Malagasy consider it essential to commence on a day declared by Panandro to be a lucky day. The commencement is always made at the north-east corner, that being deemed more sacred than any other; they then proceed to the south-east, and thence round by the west. The occupants of houses are usually the owners of them. The system of renting is little practised. A few Arab traders have hired houses for shops; when this is the case, the purchasers of goods at such shops have to pay the landlord as rent, a certain amount, according to the extent of their purchase, frequently about say one penny in every dollar.

In nearly all the houses, a hearth or fire-place is made, not far from the centre of the building, consisting of three, or usually five square upright stones, fixed at suitable distances, and used in cooking. No chimneys exist; hence the annoyance from the smoke is great, and, in some of the houses whose roofs are low, it is intolerable to a European. Most of the natives have fires occasionally kept in all their dwellings, though the cooking may be performed in a detached building. The climate of Madagascar is sufficiently cool, during a greater part of the year, to render a fire an agreeable domestic companion, especially during their evening hours.

One peculiarity in the construction of Malagasy houses respects the roof. The pitch is generally much greater from the wall-plate to the ridge, than the height of the building from the ground to the lower edge of the roof. Fifteen feet for the height of the walls, and twenty-three for the roof, is not unusual. At the gable-ends are also placed long poles, ornamented by rudely carved ornaments at the extremity. The greater the rank of the owner of the house, the longer the poles. The prerogative of building the highest house in the capital, belongs to the sovereign; no one dares build his house above the king's. The European method of building with roofs of a lower pitch, and with sloping ends, has been generally adopted in the houses lately built, and promises to supersede the plan of building with steep gable-ends. The chief objection to it with a Malagasy is, that neither his father nor his grandfather built their dwellings in that form.

The thatching of the roof, in good houses, consists of the herana, a rush, of which abundance is found in the neighbourhood of the capital. The Malagasy mode of thatching bears a strong resemblance to that practised by the South Sea Islanders. The rush is folded over a slender cane, to which it is tied down by a small reed. The cane is about five or six feet in length, and, when filled with rushes, is fastened to bamboo rafters placed on the principal timbers. The *foliæ* of prepared rushes are placed one over another, at two or three inches' distance from the margin. Roofs thus constructed look remarkably neat, and generally last from seven to ten years. The two palaces lately erected by Radama, and one or two other houses, have shingled roofs similar to those used in the Isle of France.

Many of the poorer houses are constructed of the zozoro, a species of rush, formed, by means of small canes passing through them, into a sort of mat. These, fastened to a few upright poles driven into the earth, complete the houses of great numbers of the inhabitants of Madagascar. Some are also built of bamboos split and beaten flat. These are all much colder than the wooden houses. Three or four dollars will be sufficient to complete a moderate-sized residence of this kind. No mud-wall houses are built in the capital, but many in the immediate vicinity. Some of these are coloured with different kinds of earths, as yellow or light pink, and give a pleasing variety to the scenery in which they appear.

The number of houses in Tananarivo has greatly increased within the last few years. There has been also an augmentation in the amount of population; though not, perhaps, in proportion to the increase of buildings. About the year 1820, the number of inhabitants was computed at from ten to twelve thousand. At present the population is supposed to exceed twenty thousand.

The number of houses is about six or seven thousand, affording an average of three persons to each house. The increase of one-third in the amount of the population in the short space of about eight years, distinctly shews the value of Radama's government to the country. The increase arose in part from persons preferring to settle at the capital rather than to remain in the country, for the same reasons which have led to the increase of our cities in Europe; where, however, a denser population on a given spot is no proof of a general augmentation in the inhabitants of the country,—the accumulation in the one case being founded on a diminution in another. There is, however, reason to believe that the increase in the population of Madagascar has been very general, more particularly in the vicinity of the capital, where the influence of the government has been most powerfully felt, and its vigilance most beneficially exercised. The suppression of the slave traffic, and of the horrid practice of infanticide, and the diminished sacrifice of life from the mock trials by ordeal, during the enlightened reign of Radama, will in no small degree account for the increase.

The average number of inhabitants to each house appears small. It is, however, to be remarked, that the houses consist generally of but one apartment, or that occasionally divided by a partition made of coarse matting and a few bamboos. Most of the inhabitants, excepting the poorest classes, have two houses; others three or four, or even more, several of which are used as kitchens, or occupied by their relations, slaves, and slave families. As civilization has advanced at the capital, it has augmented the desire of securing additional comforts and accommodations, and hence the increased number of habitations beyond the average increase of inhabitants. As the security of property became greater by an organized and firmly established government, and as industry, under the patronage of that government, found its reward and encouragement in a greater demand for its produce, wealth increased, and hence also the improved appearance and the modern style of many of the houses at the capital.

In the centre, and near the highest part of the town, (called by the natives Tampombohitra,* crown, or top of the town,) stands the palace, surrounded by a high palisading of strong poles. Properly speaking, the enclosure comprehending all the buildings called the palace, consists of two parts: a division being formed within it, by means of a palisading from east and west. The northern division is strictly the palace, and the southern the palace-yard, called by the natives, Anāty Rōva, i. e. "within the fence."

The northern division of the enclosure contains a building designated Trano-vōla, i. e. Silver House, built and occupied by Radama: the latter contains several buildings either in the occupation of the sovereign and part of his family, or for other uses which will be presently specified. The front line of palisadoes, in which the front gate is situated, facing the north, reaches about fifty paces; and that on the west, the usual place of entrance, about one hundred and forty paces. Part of the latter is occupied by three or four houses belonging to the government.

The ground on which the palace is erected appears to have been originally raised, by artificial means, from five to seven or eight feet above the level of the public road, which passes it in a westerly direction. The raised ground is well supported by means of a neat and strong stone wall, of native construction. The palisadoes are placed about six feet from the edge of this stone coping: they are about eighteen or twenty feet in height, firmly driven into the earth: those around the northern division are united by cross-beams placed on the top, into which large spears, painted yellow in imitation of gold, are driven with their points upwards.

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* From Tampona, vertex, or top, and Vohitra, town or village.

To the Anāty Rōva there are two public entrances; one through the palace, and another from the west. There are also two private entrances; one from the east, and another, not frequently used, from the north-east, allowing no admission whatever for strangers. The northern entrance to the palace is finished with the greatest care. A flight of twelve stone steps leads to the door, and on each side is placed a sentry-box for the guards, who are on duty day and night. The door is surmounted by a large plate of glass, and various ornaments, more showy than any pretensions to good taste would allow.

The northern division contains, as before remarked, the Silver House: this was erected about ten years ago, under the immediate superintendence of Radama, and was always selected as his residence when at the capital. It derives its name from the circumstance of the bardeaux of the roof, the gable-ends, ceilings, door-posts, &c. being ornamented with silver nails and studs. Its dimensions are small—twenty feet by twenty-four. The apartment on the ground-floor is used as a store-room; and the upper part of the building, which consists of two small rooms, was occupied by Radama. It was furnished in the European style, and improved by the modern addition of a veranda and a flight of steps.

Within the southern division, the three principal buildings are, Besakana, Mahitsy, and Masoandro. The first is considered the most *important* in all civil affairs, being regarded as the throne of the kingdom; and the second, the most *sacred* in all religious affairs. In Besakana, "great width," the new sovereign is placed, and installed; there he bathes at the great annual festival of the Fandroana, and pronounces benedictions on the people; and there also the deceased sovereign is laid in state, previous to interment.

In the house called Mahitsy, (that is, *straight*, and in a moral sense, *just*,) is kept the idol Manjakatsiroạ. Here the sikidy, or divination, is worked for the sovereign, on all affairs of public importance. It is here also, the sacrifice of a cock is made at the commencement of the Fandroana, which the sovereign attends, and after which he proceeds to bathe in Besakana.

Masoandro, (i. e. the sun,) is the house in which the newly constituted sovereign is placed immediately on acceding to the throne. Here Radama was placed by order of his father, to be guarded by the Tsiarondahy, the king's body-guard, on the evening he perceived his death to be near; and here also, Ranavalona, the successor of Radama, was placed, on becoming the sovereign of the empire.

Within this Anāty Rōva are two or three other buildings, erected in the European style: one, called Marīvo-lanitra, occupied occasionally by the sovereign; another, a small and neat residence, intended by Radama for his daughter Rakētaka; another used by the royal band of musicians, and the house built by order of Radama, under his own direction, for Mr. Jones the missionary, on his first arrival at the capital, and subsequently appropriated to Rasalimo, consort of Radama.* Here are also the houses allotted to those who are nominally the wives of the sovereign, and another surrounded by a fence, which is merely an occasional seraglio, without the strictness or refinements of Turkish despotism, jealousy, or sensuality.

But, as if to show that man in his best estate is vanity, as if he were destined to place some curb on his own desires, to erect some "*memento mori*" in the midst of his pleasures and grandeur—here, in sight of these houses of power and enjoyment, are the tombs, the dilapidated tombs, of former chieftains and kings.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the palace are the houses of several of the judges, the nobles, and the principal officers in the army, constituting this part of the town, "*componere parva cum magnis*," the Westminster of Tananarivo.

On the western side of the palace-yard, the judges hold their courts. The causes are tried in the open air, either in true patriarchal style, beneath the shadow of the fine row of fig-trees growing there, or on the stone-wall of the fence already described. Formerly the judges met to hear causes, deliberate, and administer justice, in a house, not exposed to the gaze of the rude or curious. On an occasion, however, not many years since, the king was passing by the house in which the judges were assembled, when the latter omitted to rise and pay his majesty the usual tokens of homage, either not seeing, or pretending not to see the king: Radama tenacious of respect, and believing, with a Spanish monarch, that "no ceremony should be deemed a trifle, since the king himself is but a ceremony," resolved, that "those who could see, and would not, should be made to see," and, accordingly, ordered the house to be instantly taken down, and directed that, in future, all causes should be tried, and awards given, "*sub dio*," in broad day-light, that the administration of justice might be open, and no one find excuse for not paying due respect to majesty.

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* Radama, on his marriage with Rasalimo, the Sakalava princess, requested the Missionary to relinquish the house in her favour, promising, at the same time, to furnish him with materials for another.

At a short distance from the palace, proceding northward, and immediately opposite the great path on the eastern side of the hill, is a spacious piece of ground, called Antsahatsirōa, where kabarys, or public assemblies, are frequently held, where the town-watch assembles every evening, waiting till gun-fire as the signal for proceeding to their respective wards; and where also a considerable market is held for provisions, &c. during the time of mourning for the sovereign.

A little to the west of Antsahatsirōa is the spot to which "strangers," viz. all who are not natives of Ankova, are taken, to swear allegiance. It is a small pond, sometimes fed by a spring, or, in case of drought, supplied by a few buckets of water. The oath taken here is called *mively rano*, "to strike the water," a name taken from a part of the ceremony, which consists in striking the water with boughs of trees and a spear.

At a little distance from this spot is the top of the Tarpeian rock of Madagascar, where criminals convicted of witchcraft, sorcery, and similar offences, are executed by being hurled headlong down the tremendous precipice. The fall of the unhappy victim may be about sixty or eighty feet; when he is inevitably killed, being dashed amid the scattered masses of broken rock lying at that distance: the fall is then from three to four hundred feet further to the base of the hill, from the edge of which he has been buried. The place is called Ampáhamarinana.

The usual place of execution for ordinary criminals is at the southern extremity of the hill on which the town is built. It is designated Ambohipotsy. It is a dreary spot, adapted to excite deep and melancholy feelings. Numerous skulls are scattered over the ground, the only remains of unhappy victims, who having suffered the sentence of the law, were left as they fell, to be devoured by dogs and birds. These animals appear familiar with the place, and the scenes of terror it so often exhibits, and, as if instinctively attracted to it, flock to the spot whenever there is an execution, and seize their prey almost before the executioners have left the ground. No one dares remove the body of a criminal for interment, without previously obtaining the express permission of the sovereign.

Descending the hill by the high road through the town, after leaving Antsahatsiroa, the next place of any public importance is Andohalo, where the principal kabarys, or public assemblies, are held. It is a large open space, well suited, by its natural formation, for the purpose for which it is used; and will continue to be esteemed as such, so long as the custom obtains of assembling the people *en masse* to receive messages from the sovereign, and to transact all public affairs. On the north, south, and east of this spacious area, the ground gently rises, giving the site somewhat the appearance of a natural amphitheatre, and where from eighty to one hundred thousand persons may conveniently assemble, and witness all that passes. The high road from the west runs through the centre of this Fikabariana,—“ place of holding kabarys.” The eastern side is bounded by a row of fig-trees; and the elevated ground in front of these is occupied during a kabary by the judges or officers appointed by the sovereign to deliver royal messages.

When the sovereign appears in person, a temporary stage is erected for him and his attendants; which, however, by some kind of strange anomaly in state language, is called Fārafāra, that is, "a bedstead." Its form somewhat resembles a native bedstead, and this may have led to the name; but if it were meant to intimate that the situation of a sovereign in Madagascar, is "repose upon a downy couch," it would but ill accord with facts.

To the south of Andohalo are two spots, of no small importance to a native: one, where the ceremony of Milefon-omby, i. e. "killing the calf," is performed, being another part of the ceremony of swearing the oath of allegiance; and the other spot, adjoining the above, is a large pond, where cattle and poultry enjoy many a luxurious draught—where the daughters of the people may be seen every hour of the day filling their sinys* with water—and where the smiths are busily employed in scrubbing off, with sand and water, the dirt and rust from their swords and muskets, when the trumpet of war is heard in the land, and a part of the army is about to march from the capital.

Opposite to this pond is a part of the town which neither the sovereign, nor any part of the royal family, may ever enter. Some chieftain, or sovereign of former times, placed himself and his successors for ever, under an obligation of this kind; and time has rendered the observance of the custom so sacred, that any sovereign who should have the temerity to attempt an infraction of so important a privilege, would now perhaps risk his head or his kingdom.

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* Native pitcher.

A few paces below this, still descending the hill westward, stands one of the the missionary chapels, and the central school; the same building subserving both purposes, a school-room and place of worship. Adjoining it is the dwelling-house of the Rev. D. Griffiths, Missionary.

About one hundred yards farther, a building has been erected, which comprises a repository, printing-office, and School-society's rooms for library, &c., connected with the Madagascar Mission. Near the foot of the hill, at some short distance from the above building, stood formerly an immense block of stone, which from time immemorial had been venerated as sacred, but a few years past was blown up, under the direction of the late Mons. Le Gros, in order to widen and improve the road to the capital. Some kind of mysterious affection is still cherished by the natives for the spot, combined with some undefined notion of its sanctity. It forms a boundary line, beyond which animals and vegetables, forbidden by the idols, and deemed unclean, may not be carried into the capital. Formerly no pig nor goat might pass this limit, but those are now kept at a still more respectful distance; and at present, though onions are allowed to be taken as far as this point, they may not be carried one inch beyond it.

Just below this nicely discriminating point, two paths branch off from the main road. The high-way itself is continued towards Ambohitsorohitra, the residence of the late Mr. Hastie, and thence to the fine vale of Betsimihisatra. The branch road to the north leads by Analakely, the site of the king's spring, from which the royal family is frequently supplied with water for daily use. Extensive buildings for various manufactures, under the direction of Mr. J. Cameron, have been erected in Analakily. Nearly opposite this spot there is an immense rock of sienite, from part of which, stone slabs, for most of the tombs near the capital are procured. The road leads from this part of the rock, either into the country north of the capital, or along the ridge of a hill covered with tombs, and joins the capital near the part of Andohalo which kings are forbidden to enter. The road branching to the south, leads to Ampāribé, i. e. the place of much sugarcane, passes by the depôt for muskets, leads to the vale of Betsimibisatra, to the king's threshing-floors, to a large marshy plantation of rushes, to the piece of ground allotted by the king for the missionaries on their arrival at Tananarivo; and to the road leading to the new palace of the sovereign at Soa-ierana.

At Amparibe the burial-ground for strangers is also situated, the spot was selected by the government on the decease of Mr. Brooks, missionary artisan, the first of their number who was removed after the establishment of the mission at the capital. In the same ground, several members of the mission, Mr. Hastie, Rev. D. Tyerman, and other foreigners, have been interred.

In the immediate vicinity of Tananarivo are two residences erected by Radama; one at Mahazoarivo, being merely a cottage, intended to form a retreat from the bustle of the town, and built on a very limited plan; and the other at Soa-ierana, still unfinished, but forming a mansion or palace on a highly respectable scale.

Mahazoarivo is a small village, distant about two miles south-east from the capital. The cottage was built, and the grounds laid out, entirely under the direction of Radama. The cottage itself consists of three rooms, to which are attached numerous out-houses. It was built in 1826, by Malagasy workmen, and the interior is neatly fitted up in the European style. The garden contains a collection of all plants, shrubs, flowers, &c. introduced by foreigners to the country; and a considerable, though still extremely imperfect collection, of those found in the island. It was the intention of the king to have rendered the collection of the plants of Madagascar as complete as he possibly could. When his leisure from public business permitted it, he spent much of his time in this retreat, and sought amusement sometimes in a bull-fight, and occasionally in the more quiet, but equally useful occupation, of superintending the care of the garden. Close within the gates of the front entrance, the king had formed with grass turfs two letters, "R. R. Radama, Rex." one on each side the great path to the cottage. Who, twenty years before, would have thought of a Madagascar chieftain carving out, in the turfs of his garden, the initials of his name and sovereignty in the learned language of Europe?

To the south of the cottage is a small lake, in which Radama kept a stock of fish and turtles. He had planted also in the vicinity of the lake, several rofia trees.

Soa-ierana lies to the south of Tananarivo, distant about one mile. The name was given to the site by Radama, as signifying, "a place well suited for inquiry;" meaning, perhaps, where his subjects might bring their grievances, make their requests, and assemble for the discussion of public affairs. An immense hill was cut down in 1824, to form the site of the palace; an adjoining hill was intended to be cut down, so as to improve its prospect, and form a good road of approach to it. The building was in a state of great forwardness, and would most probably have been completed in the course of a few months, had Radama lived. The prospect commanded from the palace is extensive and panoramic. The front affords a bold view of the south-west of the capital. A

Mons. Le Gros, native of France, but late of Mauritius, was engaged as architect and builder. Immense labour, for a country like Madagascar, was expended on the building, particularly in conveying timber from the forest, a distance of fifty miles. Many hundreds of the finest trees that could be found, adapted to the purpose, were felled, roughly stripped of their branches and bark, and then dragged the distance stated above, by ten, twenty, thirty, or forty men, to each piece of timber, as the case required; the roads in some places being almost "impassable," rendered the effort truly herculean. About sixty carpenters and apprentices were employed for four years on the works. The building is about one hundred and twenty-five feet long in front, and one hundred feet in depth. The structure is entirely of wood, finished on the outside in diagonal panels, resembling in appearance the style of building frequently seen in South America. It consists of a centre and two wings; and the roof, which is covered with shingles, corresponds with the threefold division. There are about forty principal rooms on the ground-floor and first story, besides a large number of attics and store-rooms. A balcony is carried round the whole extent of the building; it is about five feet in width, well guarded in part by iron railing, and in part by wood; the balcony is supported by semicircular arches, placed on columns. There are two principal entrances, south-east and north-west, and two others opposite to these. The kitchen, and passage leading to it, are wholly subterraneous. The former is two hundred feet from the building; and the passage, which is of the same length, was to have been constantly illuminated with lamps.

An iron chain, supported by low wooden posts, surrounds the whole, at the distance of forty feet from the building.

A treble row of the aviavy, wild fig-tree, was planted soon after the soil was levelled, round the grounds of the palace, having two spacious rides, or "drives" between them. It was proposed to erect handsome gates at the entrances, and a splendid jet d'eau in front. A moat was also to have been formed round the building, with two draw-bridges; and the spacious area in front of the palace was designed for holding occasional kabarys.

The principal fault perhaps in the building is, its want of elevation. The structure is too low for its extent, and several of its rooms, otherwise spacious and noble, appear paltry, and quite out of keeping with other parts, for want of six or eight feet additional height. It is, however, far more wonderful to find such an edifice at all, in a country so little advanced in civilization as Madagascar, than that its proportions should not be in good taste. Had the architect been allowed to follow his own plan, it would have been a superior building to that which he was obliged to make it.

The roads about the capital are kept in a very imperfect state of repair. There is but little level ground; the declivities are often steep. The torrents of water which pour down the roads in the rainy season, destroy the repairs made during the summer; and no highway levies are made. To the government belongs the repairing of the roads, and for that purpose it employs the prisoners, called gadralava, "long chains," a name given them from the circumstance of their being compelled to wear, and work in long iron chains, reaching from the neck to the ankle.

Very few trees adorn the capital. An aviavy, or wild fig, has almost the exclusive honour of admission within the precincts of the metropolis of Madagascar. The fruit of these is of little value, and, long before reaching perfection, is knocked off by the boys, and eaten at all risks of consequences. The vicinity of Tananarivo is almost as destitute of trees and shrubs as the capital itself, which certainly does not stand, as has been represented, in a beautifully wooded country.

Tananarivo, like most towns in Ankova, and some of the other provinces, was formerly surrounded, or intersected, by immense ditches or moats. These were cut in the earth with incredible labour, and constituted, in former times, one of the principal means of defence against the attacks of an enemy. Of these, six still remain at the capital, and are crossed in passing through the town from north to south. There are, also, a few ancient gates left standing, but to these little value is now attached. The modern system of attack and defence, by means of cannon, and a disciplined army, renders comparatively useless the gates and moats of ancient times.

The houses at the capital, and in its immediate vicinity, are superior to all the rest in the island. On leaving the capital, the houses become inferior in proportion to their distance from it, excepting those in each village belonging to the chiefs of the village or district.

The best houses in the province of Ankova, are constructed of wood, others are built of bamboo, some of rushes, and others of mud; the poorest kind are merely excavations in the earth, thatched with reeds or long grass.

This general description will probably suffice for the dwellings of the natives throughout the country, as it is difficult to give any account equally applicable to the habitations of all the people, who, in consequence of their intestine wars, have been so much separated in their social habits, as to have adopted, in each province or district, some peculiarity, either in the material of which their houses are constructed, the position in which they are built, the number or aspects of their doors or windows, or the manner in which the interior is arranged. The following are among the peculiarities of the chief tribes or races in the island.

The Hovas have their towns and villages surrounded by deep ditches. All their houses, without exception, are placed north and south, and are of the same form, having one high door in the south-west end. A window nearly as large as the door to the north-west. The divisions and arrangements of the interior are also the same in all.

In the provinces of the Antsianaka and Bezanozano, the houses stand north and south, like the Hovas, but their doors are north-west, and their windows south-west. The arrangements within are also entirely the reverse of those of the Hovas. They have ditches round their villages, and many of the houses have a second door to the north-east.

In the northern parts of Betsileo, the houses are situated north and south. The door is placed south-west, and the window north-west, the bed inside being opposite the door, and not opposite the window as in Ankova. With them, as with the Hovas, their villages are surrounded by deep ditches. They excel the Hovas in the construction of magnificent tombs over the vaults of the dead.

The houses of the Sakalavas are in general miserable huts, often little better than holes in the earth, covered with branches of trees; their towns and fortifications are also without any kind of regularity. It is probable, that in time of war, they have trusted rather to their own bravery, to the defence of their immense woods and forests, and to the food afforded by the wild cattle and other natural produce which these wilds supplied, than to the ditches by which their villages might be surrounded, or the granaries they might contain.

The Betsimisaraka have their houses built on pillars, about one or two feet above the ground. They have one window, opposite to which is the hearth in one corner of the apartment. The houses have two doors opposite each other.

The floors of the Malagasy houses are generally covered with red and yellow rush mats, neatly put together. Those of Manghabei are both soft and strong. On these mats they repose without any sort of covering, sometimes with a pillow for the head resembling a sofa-pillow, and sometimes only with a log of wood placed under the mat.

CHAP. V.

Population of Madagascar—Its probable amount—The chief political divisions of the people, and the estimated number of each division—Disproportion of population to the extent and resources of the country—General description of the Malagasy—Description of the several races in the island—Their respective provinces—The Hovas; import of the term; their figure, colour, number, &c.—The Vazimba, or probable aborigines of Madagascar—The Kimois, or nation of dwarfs—The Sakalavas; their character, colour, habits, &c.—The Bezanozano and the Antsianaka—The north and south Betsileo—The Betsimisaraka and Betamimena; their stature, complexion, &c.—The inhabitants of the Isle of St. Mary's—The Zafindramina, or descendants of the mother of Mahomet—Probable origin of the distinct races in the island—Intellectual character of the people—Moral qualities of the Malagasy—Their general disregard of truth, &c.—Baneful influence of superstition on their moral character.

In a country which has, until recently, remained almost entirely destitute of every species of statistical record, it is exceedingly difficult to obtain any thing approaching to accurate information respecting the number of its inhabitants. Hence the population of Madagascar has been variously estimated by different writers. It has, however, generally been supposed to amount to about four millions; and from as correct a census as the state of the island admitted, taken a short time previous to the decease of the late king, Radama, it appears probable that this estimate is not excessive, but that it would be a nearer approximation to its actual amount of population, to state it at from four millions and a half, to five millions. As the basis of this estimate, it was ascertained by Prince Coroller, from the officers of the respective districts, the Vadintany, that there were upwards of one million of houses: five persons were adopted as the average number of each household. The entire population thus given, comprehends the four chief political divisions of the people—the Hovas; the Sakalavas; the Betsileo; and the Betanimena and Betsimisaraka. Their relative numbers are thus estimated:—

The Hovas	750,000
The Sakalavas, including the Bezanozeno and the Antsianaka	1,200,000
The Betsileo	1,500,000
The Betanimena and Betsimisaraka	1,000,000
Total	4,450,000

This amount of population is evidently less than the island has contained at former and not remote periods of its history. The embankments spread over large tracts of country, now overgrown with grass or brushwood, shew that these parts were once regularly-cultivated rice-fields; and the scattered ruins of villages, or whole ranges of villages, now totally deserted, especially in the Betsileo and Sakalava countries, mark, though imperfectly, the extent to which the country has been depopulated.

The female sex greatly preponderates, which, as well as the diminution of population, may in part be accounted for by the fearful waste of life among the men, in their frequent and barbarous wars. The slave-trade, wars, infanticide, trials by ordeal, and the prevalence of certain diseases, may be specified as reasons sufficiently accounting for the very limited population of a country capable of maintaining at least five times its present number. Still the amount of population is sufficient to excite interest in their behalf, and give importance to the events by which they are affected.

Madagascar is not inhabited by one single race (presenting only minor and provincial differences, yet having a common origin, and constituting an extended nation,) but by a number of distinct tribes, more or less numerous, evidently derived from more than one source; differing also in many respects from each other; and remaining, at the present time, though nominally comprised in one political empire, distinct and peculiar nations. No single account would, therefore, present a just description of the various tribes comprised in the population of Madagascar.

There are, however, points in which they bear a general resemblance to each other; among these are the following: the inhabitants are rather below the middle stature, which but few exceed; and their countenances do not exhibit that prominency of features which so frequently distinguishes the European and Asiatic nations. The men are more elegantly formed than the women, in whom there is usually a greater tendency to corpulency than in the other sex. The beards of the men are but weak, and are plucked out in youth. Their hands are not so warm to the touch as those of Europeans, and their blood by thermometer is colder. These appear the chief among the few points in which, physically considered, there is any resemblance between the several nations. The distinction most strongly marked is that of colour; and this, though presenting slight variations in each tribe, separates the population of Madagascar into two great classes, and is by some supposed to allow of its being traced to only two sources—the one distinguished by a light, exquisitely formed person, fair complexion, and straight or curling hair; the other more robust, and dark-coloured, with woolly hair.[*] In one or the other of these classes, the several tribes inhabiting the island may be included.

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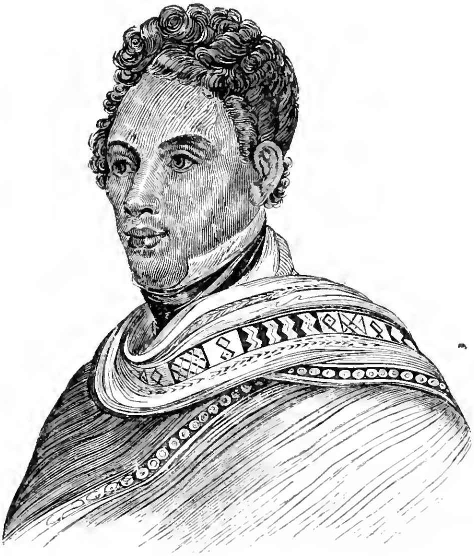
[*] *Woolly:* the analogy on which the hair has been called wool, is extremely loose and general. It implies nothing more than a slight resemblance.

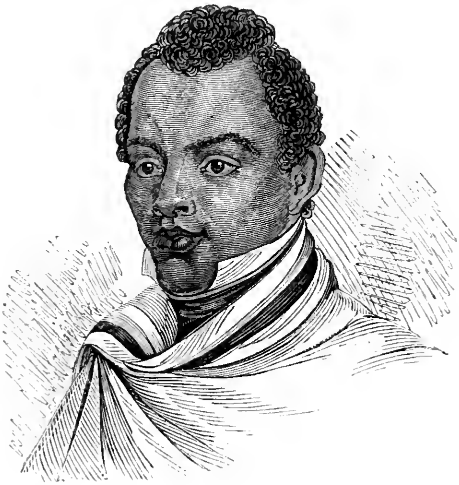
The accompanying wood-cut of the likeness of the chief officer in the embassy sent to England and France in 1835, which is copied from an excellent portrait taken by Sperling, is given as exhibiting the characteristics of the fair or olive-coloured class.



With regard simply to colour, there are but two distinct races in Madagascar—the olive and the black. But as these have occasionally intermixed, there are all possible varieties between them; and in some it would be difficult to affirm to which division they belonged, being as much inclined to one colour as the other. The vigour of health frequently gives a ruddy tinge to the countenance of the olive-coloured race; but this, while it removes them from approximating in complexion to the yellow hue of the Malays, does not give them any resemblance to the copper-coloured Indians of America.

With respect to the quality of the hair, there are two divisions also—the Tsotra, (tso-bolo,) straight, and the Ngita, curly, or rather, frizzly. These have also intermixed; and the same remark applies here as to colour—the frizzly has become almost straight in some cases, and the straight almost frizzly.

The above two distinctions of colour and hair do not, however, make two separate classes, but rather four; for there are:—1. olive-coloured natives having straight hair; and, 2. olive-coloured natives with curly or frizzly hair: of this class the accompanying wood-cut of one of the members of the late embassy to Europe is given as an illus-



tration. Besides the two classes just described, there are, 3. blacks having straight hair, and, 4. blacks with curly or frizzly hair. But, ordinarily, the straight hair is with the olive-coloured; and the curly or frizzly, with the black.

Besides the distinctions arising from colour and hair, which would exhibit the people in two great classes, the olive and the black, the population of the island may be considered as comprised in four chief or principal political divisions, occupying as many large geographical sections, which are also in a certain sense identical; as the designation of the people and the country they inhabit is frequently the same. These divisions are, first, the Hova; second, the Sakalava; third, the Betsileo; fourth, the Betanimena and Betsimisaraka.

In the early part of the reign of the father of the late Radama, a period not more than seventy years ago, the Malagasy were divided into not fewer than fifty distinct tribes, governed by their respective chieftains, and independent of each other; the chief of each tribe exercising absolute power over the lives, property, and services of his subjects. Since that period the processes of amalgamation have been rapid and effectual, and the principal divisions now recognized are those already named: all the rest are either subdivisions of these, or people belonging to one or the other intermixed. That they are all nearly the same, is manifest from their general colour, language, customs, and the names of towns, rivers, hills, and productions.

That they are in some measure also distinct tribes, is manifest from their dialects, and some peculiar customs. That they have intermingled, is manifest from their intestine wars, which have not been extirminating wars, nor wars prosecuted wholly for obtaining slaves for exportation, but wars of conquest, booty, and domestic slavery.

They have been in the habit also of wandering or fleeing from one part of the country to another, when pursued by an enemy more powerful than themselves, and settling where there was the greatest prospect of safety, just as the remains of the Vazimba, the original inhabitants of Ankova, now reside between the Imania and the Imanambolo, in Menabé. A greater approximation to general amalgamation will be perceived in the course of a few years, from the constant residence of the Hova troops at distant parts, in military stations on different parts of the island, as most of these troops either intermarry with the women of the provinces, or live with them in a far less honourable state. The chief divisions, already referred to, we now proceed to notice; both as they regard the people themselves, and the portions of the country they respectively occupy.

Geographically considered, the Sakalavas, with whom we commence, are divided into two great sections, North and South Sakalavas: the first includes the inhabitants of Iboina in the north, and Ambongo in the north-west; the latter, those of Menabé in the west and south-west, extending on the west side of the island to Firenenana, which continues to the south of St. Augustine's Bay. This extensive region is sometimes called the Sakalava country. A mixture of the Sakalavas and Betsileo inhabit the regions to the south of Firenenana, embracing the southern extremity of the island.

By some the Bezanozano, a small tribe, chiefly inhabiting Ankay, situated on the south-east of Ankova, are considered as a branch of the Sakalavas. The Antsianaka, inhabiting the province of the same name, to the north of Ankova, are also considered as belonging to this nation, which includes the black races of Madagascar.

The Bezanozano and Antsianaka, are supposed to have been conquered, and first separated, in a state of captivity, or driven by war from the other Sakalavas, though the distance to which they are removed is not great: the Bezanozano, on the east, (occupying Ankaratra,) may be supposed to have descended from the northern Sakalavas, occupying Iboina, &c., and the Bezanozano on the north-west, have probably descended from the Sakalavas of Ambongo or Menabé.

The next division of the country, according to the races of the people, is the Betsileo, lying immediately within that of the southern Sakalavas, and comprehending the interior or central provinces of the island. It extends from Ankaratra southward, through Tatsimo to Tanosy; Tatsimo being another name for "southern Betsileo." The Tanosy seem to be a branch of the southern Betsileo, blended with the Betanimena, whose country proceeds from the southern extremity along the eastern side of the island, and stretches to Anteva, the province bordering on the country of the Batanimena and the Bezanozano.

The country of the Betsileo also includes rather less of the north part of the island than formerly. The region immediately beyond the Ankaratra range of hills to the south, sometimes called the Betsileo country, probably belonged to the latter before they were subdued by the Hovas, nearly forty years ago. But the country to the south, nearest the Ankaratra, is now reckoned a part of Ankova, and is called Vakinankaratra, i. e. "broken off by Ankaratra," and this proceeds south to the Imania; but from the Imania southward, to a limit not very accurately defined, the country is called Betsileo. Beyond this boundary it is called Tatsimo, or southern Betsileo, and though Vakinankaratra is now one of the six divisions of

Ankova, its inhabitants are evidently Betsileo, who are spread over an extent of country greatly exceeding that of the province which bears their name. The Betsileo are evidently one of the most ancient races in the island, and, according to their own traditions, came originally from Anteva, a province on the south-western coast, and now inhabited by the mixed race of the Betanimena and Betsimisaraka.

The country of the Betanimena commences southward at the Mananjary, and terminates northward at Tany-fotsy: the country of the Betsimisaraka spreads along the eastern shore till it joins that of the Sakalavas of the north, which includes the country sometimes called Hiarambazaha, or Vohimaro.

An account of Ankova, the country of the Hovas, has been formerly given, and those of the other chief divisions of the island have been added; it will, therefore, be proper to give some account of the nations or races by whom they are severally inhabited.

The first and most important race is the Hovas, who inhabit the province of Ankova. They have in every respect the pre-eminence, and possess the entire sovereignty over the greater number of the other provinces.

From Ankova, and from Vakinankaratra, the army of Radama, by which the greater part of the island was conquered, and by which the conquest is maintained, was exclusively formed; and the island may, therefore, be regarded as held in subjection by the Hovas. The army was, in the first instance, formed at Tananarivo, the capital of the Hovas, and afterwards augmented from other parts of the province.

The use of the word Hova, though generally employed to designate the olive-coloured race, requires further explanation:—First, as to Ankova, or the country of the

Hovas. This is the principal residence of the olive-coloured race, and as they seem to be the proper and original Hovas, they give name to the district where they reside. But these olive-coloured are not the *only* inhabitants of Ankova. There are quite as many who are black, but who are also called Hovas, from their residing in Ankova; in fact, there are comparatively few who are not black residing out of Imerina, and Imerina forms only one division of Ankova; and in Imamo, Mandridrano, Vonizongo, Valalafotsy, and Vakinankaratra, a large majority are black. Yet, in a restricted sense, all these, as belonging to Ankova, may be called Hovas. Hence, then, the race of the Hovas (olive-coloured) resides in Ankova, and gives name to the district. But all are not olive-coloured Hovas who reside in Ankova, for there are black natives also who are Hovas. So that in one sense, *all* are Hovas that live in Ankova—that is, so far as the name of a *district* is concerned. But in another sense, *all* are *not* Hovas that live in Ankova—that is, so far as a difference of origin prevails.

Another signification of the term is, perhaps, the most important: the Hovas are a race distinct from all the rest of the natives of Madagascar, an olive-coloured race, and evidently *not* the aborigines of the country; whether they are of Malay origin, or of an African kingdom north of Mosambique, (as was thought by Prince Coroller,) or from Abyssinia, as the same prince at one time supposed, are matters for inquiry and speculation. There is, perhaps, considerable reason for thinking that the Hova race may be a colony of Javanese; but to detail the circumstances on which that opinion has been founded, might be thought tedious and uniteresting.

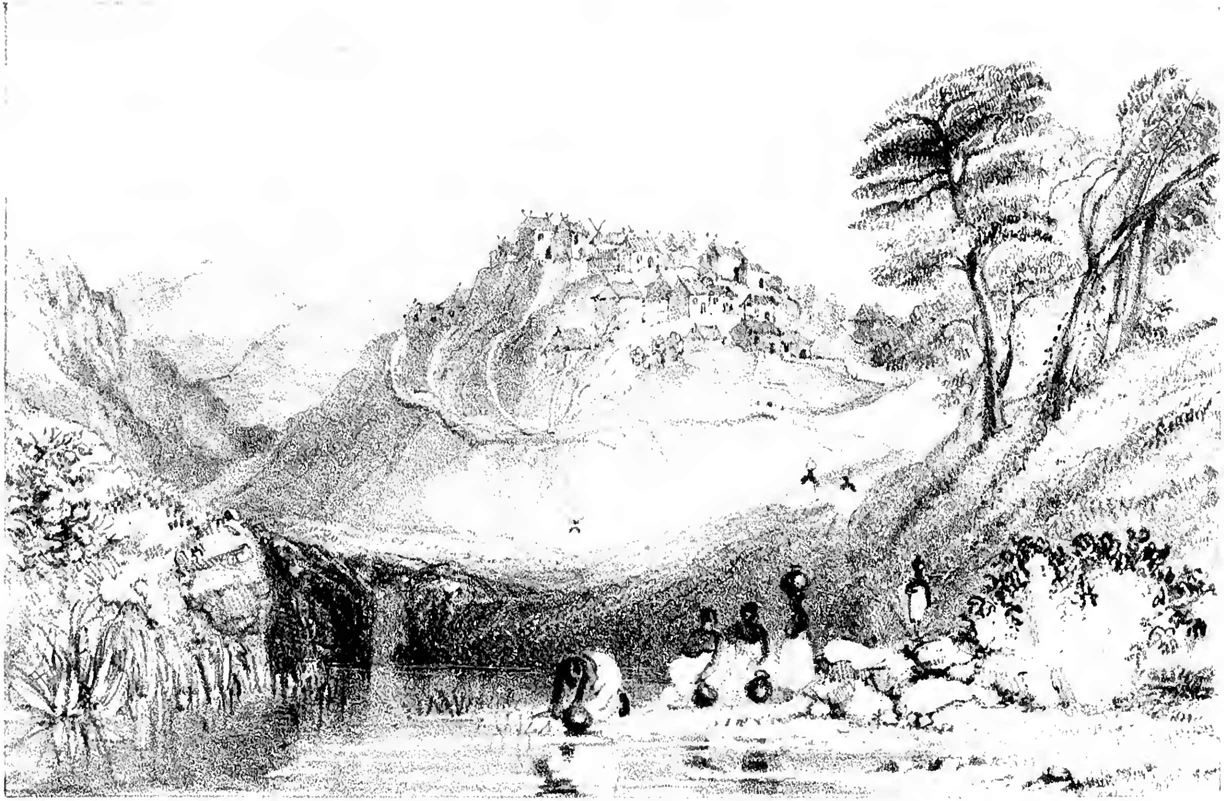
If a stranger were to land on the coast, say, at Tamatave, and meet an olive-coloured native, he would be quite safe in saying, "This is a Hova," as to his physical race and origin. But as that same Hova might happen also to be a nobleman, it would be an affront to call him a Hova, for he must be called an Andriana. Or, he might chance to be a slave, and then it would be a title of too much honour to call him Hova.

The central province of Madagascar is now the country of the Hovas. They are not, however, the aborigines of this part of the country, and it is impossible to determine, with certainty, from what part of the island they came, and obtained possession of this region. It is, however, their general belief, that they came from the south-east of Madagascar, and gradually dispossessed the aborigines of the country.

There is some ground for supposing the Vazimba were the first inhabitants of Ankova. The term Vazimba has three several significations. In its strictest sense, it appears to express the aborigines of the interior of the island of Madagascar, from whatever part of the coast they may have come. In a former part of this chapter, it has been mentioned that between the two famous rivers, Imania and Imanambolo, in Menabé, there exists a small race of people called Vazimba, and it has been at times thought, that they exhibit some correspondence with the accounts given by Rochon, of a people called the Kimos, inhabiting the interior of the island. The notices given by Rochon are far too long for insertion here, but the amount of them is briefly this, "That in the interior of Madagascar is a nation of dwarfs, averaging three feet six inches in stature, called Kimos, (or Quimos,) that they are of a lighter colour than the negroes; their hair short and woolly, that their arms are unusually long, that their females generally nourish their young with cow's milk; that in intellectual faculties they are equal to other inhabitants of the island; that they are active, industrious, and courageous; that they manufacture iron and steel, of which they make lances and assagays; that they have villages on the summits of high mountains, live chiefly on vegetables, and rear great quantities of cattle; that they hold no communication with the other islanders, and are perfectly peaceable, unless provoked and attacked." The writer adds, "that at the distance of two or three days' journey from Fort Dauphin are several small barrows or hillocks, owing their origin to a former massacre of these Kimos."

Singular as this account is, particularly in the instance of the diminutive stature of the people described, it is confidently reported, that on the banks of the rivers already named, there still exists a race of natives corresponding generally with the particulars stated by Rochon. The distance, however, of these rivers from Fort Dauphin is considerably greater than the situation mentioned by Rochon as the country of this nation of dwarfs. He speaks of sixty leagues north-west of Fort Dauphin, and west of Matitany. The distance to the rivers in Menabé must be, according to any calculation approaching to accuracy, 100 or 120 leagues. The people may, however, have migrated farther north within the last century; or, what is still more probable, Rochon's account may have been incorrect.

Flacourt treats the subject in a very brief and cavalier-like style, regarding the whole account as fabulous, and forming merely an amusing counterpart to the stories of the giants. Rochon condemns the incredulity of Flacourt, and thinks he has solid facts to oppose to his scepticism on the point. The most objectionable part of the account



A Native Village

Fisher Son & C° London and Paris

respects the stature; in this there must be a mistake, nearly all the rest is credible. A *few* dwarfs are met with in Imerina, but probably not in any greater proportion to the population than in other countries, and certainly not in sufficient numbers, nor possessing any peculiarities of form, to justify a belief of their having constituted a distinct race.

It is observable, that the traditional account given in the present day, of the Vazimba, is, that they formed a race of people a little below the common stature, having a remarkably thin and flat configuration of the head, and narrowing to the forehead. Their graves correspond with the description given by Rochon. They resemble small barrows, or gentle elevations of earth, with an upright stone placed in or near the centre, and a number of smaller stones rudely thrown together, like the ruins of an ancient grave.

It is not easy to arrive at any distinct conclusion: possibly the Vazimba, said to have lived formerly in Imerina, and whose graves still exist, came originally from the same part of the country as those who are now said to occupy the banks of the two rivers in Menabé, and that these may be a part of the people described by M.M. de Modave, de Commerson, and de Surville, in the "Voyage de Rochon." Their accounts are, perhaps, exaggerated, yet not without some foundation in truth. It is, however, somewhat remarkable, that many of the particulars stated by the above writers, exactly correspond with the Hovas, excepting the diminutive stature. The Hovas are certainly *below* the general stature of the Malagasy, and this may easily have given rise to the report of their "pygmean" dimensions. But in regard to colour, intelligence, activity, industry, courage, manufactures, productions, habitations, the Hovas are what Rochon describes the Kimos to be.*

Without entering further into the inquiry at present, it may be sufficient to remark, that tradition and a few incidental circumstances induce the belief that the first settlers in Imerina came from some part eastward of Tananarivo, and fixed their residence at the villages of Alasora, Ambohitraina, and the neighbourhood. These villages are within a few miles of the capital, and they are unquestionably among the most ancient in that part of the country. They, as well as most places in Imerina, contain numerous graves of the Vazimba; constituting, as will be afterwards shewn, the sacred places at which the natives offer their religious worship. One circumstance indicating, agreeably to the customs of the country, the antiquity and early importance of Ambohitraina, is, that its speakers, to the present day, are renowned in the public kabarys, i. e. assemblies of the people, for tracing to a remote antiquity the genealogy and origin of their chieftains; a circumstance to which the Malagasy attach the highest importance.

The population of Ankova is variously estimated; but, probably, taking an average from the conflicting statements given, from eighty to one hundred thousand may be regarded as nearly correct. This population is widely scattered in numerous villages over the surface of the country. The villages usually contain from fifty to one hundred houses each; while the capital, with its immediate vicinity, contains a much larger number of inhabitants than any other equal portion of the country. Most of the villages are situated on eminences; some of them are extremely high, and difficult of access. They are usually encircled, for security, by a deep fosse; the earth from which being thrown up on the inner side, forms a bank round the village, which renders it difficult to scale the sides of the ditch, and adds to the safety of the people.

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* Rochon expresses his surprise that Mons. Commerson had not verified the relation of some Vazimbas having been buried under the barrows pointed out to him, by opening one of them. This is entirely overlooking the prejudices of the natives, who would never suffer a Vazimba grave to be so desecrated. They would expect to suffer the most terrible vengeance as the punishment of the sacrilegious outrage.

The language of Ankova may be considered as the standard of the Madagascar dialects. It is also the most copious, and, being the least nasal, is the most pleasing to the ear of an European. Its copiousness may in part be accounted for by the constant influx of strangers from all parts of the island; these strangers, as well as the soldiers returning from the different provinces after a campaign, or a season of garrison duty, bring with them in many cases, no doubt without being aware of it, or intending it, valuable additions to the stock of the Tenin-kova, the language of the Hovas.

In person, as already remarked, the Hovas are generally below the middle stature. Their complexion is a light olive, frequently fairer than that of the inhabitants of the southern parts of Europe; their features rather flat than prominent; their lips occasionally thick and projecting, but often thin, and the lower gently projecting, as in the Caucasian race: their hair is black, but soft, fine, and straight, or curling; their eyes are hazel, their figure erect; and though inferior in size to some of the other tribes, they are well proportioned. Their limbs are small, but finely-formed; and their gait and movements are agile, free, and graceful. Though distinguished by their promptitude and activity, their strength is inferior to that of other tribes; and they are far more susceptible of fatigue from travelling or labour.

Next to the Hovas are the Sakalavas. More numerous, especially when regarded as comprehending the Bezanozano and the Antsianaka, than their successful rivals, and occupying more extensive territories, this nation was, during the last century, the most powerful in Madagascar, having reduced the Hovas to subjection, and exacted from them a formal acknowledgment of their dependence. Tribute was annually sent from Ankova to the king of Menabé, the ruler of the South Sakalavas, until Radama invaded their territories with an army of one hundred thousand men, and induced their chieftain to form with him a treaty of peace. The Sakalavas are a brave and generous people; physically considered, they are the finest race in Madagascar. In person they are tall and robust, but not corpulent; their limbs are well formed, muscular, and strong. On them a torrid sun has burnt its deepest hue, their complexion being darker than that of any others in the island. Their features are regular, and occasionally prominent; their countenance open and prepossessing; their eyes dark, and their glance keen and piercing; their hair black and shining, often long, though the crisped or curly hair occurs more frequently among them than the inhabitants of other provinces. Their aspect is bold and imposing, their step firm though quick, and their address and movements often graceful, and always unembarrassed.

The God of nature has so liberally supplied their wants with his bounties of spontaneous growth, in their soil, that, unless roused by strong excitement, the habits of the Sakalavas, like those of other uncivilized countries, incline to indolence rather than activity. Summoned to war, especially to defensive war, they are prompt, energetic, resolute, and daring; but, the storm passed, the immediate danger removed, or surrounded with peace, and dwelling in security, they surrender themselves to a state of comparative indolence; and become the too-willing victims of the delusions by which their race are more strongly spell-bound than most of the other natives of Madagascar—charms, divination, and sorcery.

Towards Europeans, the Sakalavas have generally cherished sentiments of friendship, entertaining an exalted opinion of their superiority. And though themselves degraded at present by their childish superstitions, by their faith in witchcraft and all its endless absurdities, they yet exhibit ample proofs of mental powers capable, under proper culture, of the highest attainments: if enriched with the means of intellectual and moral improvement, they will, in all probability, rise, as others, once as dark, deluded, and degraded as they are, have emerged from barbarism, and attained eminence and moral worth among the nations. There is something in the very appearance of the Sakalava in his favour. His manly air and gait, his full countenance and penetrating look, declare him destined to something higher and nobler than he has yet attained. In ordinary intercourse, the Sakalavas discover much shrewdness, with less of cunning or deceit than many of their neighbours.

The Betsileo, a term signifying *invincible*, form a third distinct race in Madagascar; and though in some respects they resemble their neighbours and conquerors, the Hovas, in others they are distinct. They are generally low in stature, slender in figure, erect, and nimble in their movements; their colour is occasionally light copper, though frequently dark; their lips are thick, the eyes hazel, and their hair black, long, and curling. In these respects they approximate to the Hovas; but, in their patriarchal mode of life, modest unassuming address, the absence of any thing like a bold and martial bearing in aspect or behaviour, their attachment to the peaceful labours of agriculture, want of that energy, enterprise, and cunning which have made the Hovas sovereigns of a large portion of the island, as well as in many of their manners and customs, they appear to be a different people, and seem to possess few, if any, traits of character which could have originated, or have justified the assumption of the name by which they are now distinguished.

The Betanimena and Betsimisaraka, already stated to be evidently but one people, constitute the next distinct and numerous portion of the inhabitants of Madagascar, differing in many respects from the Betsileo, as much as the latter do from their western neighbours the Sakalavas.

In stature, the Betanimena and Betsimisaraka resemble the Hovas, and, though in complexion rather darker, are, next to them, the fairest race in the island: their hair is generally frizzly, though not always black; their movements are less active than those of the inhabitants of the centre and western parts of the island; and though their limbs are strong and muscular, they exhibit only occasionally the bold and martial courage of the Sakalavas, or the enterprise, consciousness of power, and industry of the Hovas; though peculiarly distinguished by cleanliness in their houses and apparel, they seem, with comparatively few exceptions, to be degraded in morals below most of their countrymen, and are often the subjects of apathy and indolence in equal extremes. They are, however, in some respects an interesting people.

The inhabitants of the Isle of St. Mary's call themselves the descendants of Abraham—a designation most probably brought by some of the numerous pirates who, since the discovery of the island, have settled on its borders, and, intermarrying with the aborigines, have ultimately mingled their peculiar characters with those of the native inhabitants. The lineaments of European features, occasionally observable in the countenances of the Betsimisaraka and the Betanimena, may probably have been derived from this early intercourse of the natives with Europeans.

In the province of Matitanana, the Arabs, who for centuries past have been accustomed to trade with the Malagasy, have their principal settlements; and this province is the chief residence of the people designated Zafindramina, descendants of the mother of Mahomet, from Zafy, descendants, and Amina, for "Imana," the mother of the prophet. It is supposed that at some remote period, a number of Arabs, followers of the Prophet, settled in Matitanana, and, by intermarrying with the natives, became amalgamated with the original population, but gave to the descendants the distinctive name which they still bear. The Betsimisaraka is composed of the Zafibirihama, the Zafindramina blended with the aborigines of Matitanana and the adjacent provinces. This may account for the lightness of their colour, and the number of distinguished chiefs that have risen up among them. Without specifying others, we may mention the late Jean René, Fisatra, and Prince Corroller, who were of the race of the Zafindramina.

The Bezanozano, "anarchical," are the next tribe that requires notice. They are not numerous, yet seem to be totally distinct from the Betsimisaraka on the one hand, and the Hovas on the other. They are not tall, but remarkably stout; their neck is short, their bust full, their colour black, their features flat, their hair occasionally curly, but most frequently approaching to the frizzly or crisped appearance. Their joints are stiff, and their movements heavy: they are considered the best coolies, or bearers of burdens, in the country. They exhibit many commendable traits of character, manifest frequently great decision and firmness, with independency of action, and a fondness for domestic life. Polygamy prevails to a very limited extent, and their morals appear superior to those of many other tribes.

The Antsianaka, "not subjects of others," though regarded as a distinct race, appear to resemble the last tribe in its most distinguishing peculiarities. They are black in colour, short in stature, and firmly set; their limbs are strong. The Antsianaka are more numerous than the Bezanozano; and however independent they may at one time have been, they are now easily held in subjection by the Hovas.

The power of disciplined troops, and the comparative weakness of mere numbers, were strikingly evinced in a fact which lately occurred in this province; in which it is stated, that three thousand of the natives were successfully opposed and routed by *five* soldiers. It is reported, that at the first shot one of the three thousand was killed, and that the rest, probably expecting a similar fate, instantly fled.

The above are the principal races or tribes recognized by the people themselves; and though there are others, especially in the southern parts of the island, with which we are less familiar than with those already described, they are inferior in number and importance, and are rather branches of them than distinct tribes.

Physically considered, the various nations now inhabiting Madagascar appear to form two distinct races, in many respects totally dissimilar, and having each a separate and probably remote origin. Between these races the distinction of colour is marked and permanent. The peculiarities of the dark race are, a black complexion, and a taller stature than the olive-coloured tribes, stouter body, thick projecting lips, curly or frizzly hair, a frank and honest bearing, or a grave or timid expression of countenance; some of the tribes exhibiting a full bust, resembling the Africans on the Mozambique shore.

The fairer race, including the Hovas, and many individuals among the Betsileo, the Betsimisaraka, and Betanimena, but especially the Hovas, are distingushed by a light olive or copper skin, smaller stature, long hair, dark hazel or black eyes, erect figure, courteous and prepossessing address, active movements, with an open and vivacious aspect.

All the tribes have naturally fine and regular teeth, beautifully white, which is to be ascribed to their practice of washing them regularly, and cleaning or bleaching them by the use of a dye, or pigment, made from the laingio,* a native plant. The former race probably emigrated, at some remote period, from the adjacent coast of Africa. The latter have evidently one origin in common with that singular and astonishing race whose source is yet involved in mysterious uncertainty, but

"Whose path was on the mountain wave;
Whose home was on the sea:"

whose spirit of adventurous enterprise led them, at a period when navigation was almost unknown in Europe, to visit the borders of Africa and of Asia, and whose descendants now people the shores of the straits of Malacca, the Malayan archipelago, and the chief clusters of the Polynesian islands.

We have no better means of ascertaining the period at which the distinct tribes now inhabiting Madagascar arrived on its shores, than we have of tracing the several races to the sources of their origin. The dark-coloured natives appear to have been the earliest settlers in the island, and may therefore be considered as the aborigines of the country, as tradition respecting the settlement of the fairer race invariably represents them as having, at the time of their arrival, found the country inhabited. Their languages do not assist the inquiry, for they have been so intimately blended, as to present, in those spoken by the distinct races respectively, fewer peculiarities than are in other points observable among those by whom they are used.

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* Sophonicus lingum.

We have already seen that the physical peculiarities of the several tribes now constituting the population of Madagascar, are considerably diversified; and serviceable as an acquaintance with their distinctions might be, in aiding our inquiries into the origin of the nations now peopling our globe, and the means and the course by which many tribes of the human family reached the countries which they now inhabit, these points are, when the mental and moral qualities of the people are regarded, comparatively unimportant. We contemplate their intellectual habits and powers, and their peculiarities of mind, with greater satisfaction, and derive from these, when viewed in connexion with their physical constitution, new evidence, not only of the fact that God has made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth, but that He has endowed them with faculties of a corresponding order; and that while the same variety is observable in this as in other portions of the Creator's workmanship, all the essential elements of our intellectual nature belong equally to the several portions of mankind; and that the elevation, strength, and vigour these attain in some, and the imbecility and prostration to which they have sunk in others, are to be ascribed to the culture bestowed and the direction given to the one, and the neglect, indolence, and vice by which the other is degraded and destroyed. And though the lineaments of their character shew, with affecting distinctness, how largely they have shared in the calamities which sin has inflicted on our race, a knowledge of this will not diminish our concern for their welfare, nor repress our desires to become more intimately acquainted with their circumstances.

In order to a correct view of the Malagasy, some account of their mental and moral qualities is necessary. In noticing these, we observe, that the intellectual powers of the Malagasy are not inferior to their physical qualities. Their mental faculties, though, in the majority of cases, deteriorated by sensuality, enfeebled and cramped in their exercise by the juggleries of divination and sorcery and the absurdities of superstition, are yet such as to warrant the conclusion, that they are not inferior to other portions of the human race—that if liberated from the debasing trammels by which they are now confined, and favoured with enlightened and generous culture, they are capable of high mental excellence.

Among the dark-coloured race, the Sakalavas manifest the greatest intellectual vigour, uniting a remarkable quickness of perception with soundness of judgment; but we are not so well acquainted with any of these as with the fairer portion of the inhabitants, especially the Hovas, and to them, chiefly, our observations refer. Their mode of thinking, as described by Mr. Baker, who was for many years connected with the Mission at the capital, is generally clear, definite, and consecutive; often prolix in introducing a thought, but distinct and pointed in exhibiting the thought itself; shrewd and ready in argument or dispute, frequently enforcing their opinions with perspicuity, order, and confidence. Like all uncivilized nations, they are, however, exceedingly averse to intellectual effort; and hence, though their mental exercise is prompt and lively, they do not seem to possess the qualities of mind requisite for close and continued thought. The imagination is in most frequent use, and, like all uncivilized nations, they are fond of metaphors, unfolding or applying many of their popular maxims by allegory or fable.

The almost entire absence of abstract nouns in the language of Madagascar, indicates one great peculiarity in the mind of the nation, and has probably exerted considerable influence in continuing, if not in originating, the modes of thinking most prevalent among the people, rendering them so much more familiar with sensible than with intellectual objects. Facts, anecdotes, occurrences, metaphors, or fables, relating to or derived from sensible and visible objects, appear to form the basis of most of their mental exercises. This also, in all probability, augments the impurity of those chambers of imagery which their imaginations create, and in which it appears to afford them delight to revel.

Notwithstanding mental application is in general so irksome, their acquaintance with numbers, the extensive calculations many of the natives make, their keenness in barter or trade, their system of government, and many of their usages, indicate considerable strength of mind; and when a stimulus sufficiently powerful is applied, they have shewn in many instances no natural deficiency of clear and vigorous intellectual faculties; while the specimens of eloquence and poetry, few indeed in number, with which we are acquainted, cannot be regarded but as the fruits of native genius of no common order. The introduction of letters, the general diffusion of education, and the labours of the press, established among them, are already producing the most extensive and beneficial effects, in exciting the long dormant energies of the native mind. Many, in an exceedingly short space of time, have been able to read their own language with correctness and fluency; while others in the more advanced state of their education have advanced with equal rapidity.

The moral qualities of the Malagasy are less equivocal than their mental characteristics, and far more censurable and injurious. With less that is sprightly and prepossessing in manners and address, the dark-coloured tribes possess more that is commendable and amiable in social life; and there are among them more straightforwardness and honesty than in the fairer races. The latter, with the exception of the Betsileo, exhibit, with but few traits of character that can be regarded with complacency, much that is offensive to every feeling of purity and every principle of virtue. They are often, probably under the influence of superstition and revenge, coolly and deliberately cruel towards their vanquished in war; they appear to be naturally vain, self-complacent, and indolent, unless when roused to effort by ambition, avarice, revenge, or lust: ambition and a love of domination appear inherent. They exhibit also a strong inclination, where they possess the means, to indulge in those gratifications which are the usual attendants on indolence, viz. gluttony and intemperance. From the debasing habits of inebriety the population of Ankova are restrained by the enforcement of laws which make intoxication a capital crime; but if free from the restraint these laws impose, it is supposed no people would surrender themselves more completely to this humiliating vice than the Hovas.

Their sensuality is universal and gross, though generally concealed: continence is not supposed to exist in either sex before marriage, consequently it is not expected, and its absence is not regarded as a vice.

The relative affections, as might be expected, are often feeble and uncertain. Family feuds are frequent, and many of the public trials before the judges are between branches of the same family. Occasionally two brothers, or a brother and sister, avoid all friendly intercourse for years; and the conjugal, parental, and filial ties are often dissevered for the most trivial causes. Yet the claims of relationship are distinctly recognized by custom and law. If one branch of a family becomes poor, the members of the same family support him; if he be sold into slavery for debt, they often unite in furnishing the price of his redemption; if he dies, they bury him, and provide for his survivors; and if he is engaged in government service, the sovereign expects them to support him. The laws facilitate and encourage, and sometimes even enforce, such acts of kindness. In many instances, where a person is condemned to slavery, which is called being *lost*, the farantsa, a sort of public appraisers, put a nominal value on him, by the payment of which he can be redeemed by his relatives, but not by any other persons. Public odium frequently attends the non-performance of relative duties. But in such cases the previous disowning of a relative exonerates the party from all obligations to the disowned, just as the adoption of a child, or the marrying a wife, involves all the claims of these relationships.

Friendships by compact are often faithful, lasting, and highly beneficial; very great kindness is also shown by parties not bound by formal compact, but merely by the ties of acquaintance and neighbourhood. Visiting, assisting in distress, lending and borrowing property and money, &c.

are carried on much more commonly and freely than amongst neighbours or relatives in England. A kindness of heart in these things is called *malemy fanahy*, "tender disposition;" and a compliant, easy temper is called *mora fanahy*, "easy disposition." The former is always esteemed excellent, but the latter is capable of being excessive, and is then regarded as foolish and weak.

Hospitality, a few of the southern parts of the island perhaps excepted, is exercised with cheerfulness and promptitude, especially towards strangers. The general disposition of the Malagasy, when they are free from the influence of superstition or revengeful feelings, is also quiet and indifferent, rather than violent and savage. Selfishness is held in universal detestation: the word used to denote a selfish person is, *sarotra*, "hard," or "difficult;" and numerous tales are told to impress the minds of children with its abhorrent nature; in fact, they all admit that a selfish disposition in eating, drinking, &c., betraying a desire to monopolize the best to oneself, is disgusting.

Although there is no single word in the Madagascar language to signify, literally, "generosity," there is little difficulty in expressing the idea. *Mora*, "easy," is often used for generous, and so is *malemy fanahy*, as implying kind-heartedness as opposed to selfishness and avarice. Gratitude, also, has no appropriate word; yet, to thank, to return kindness for kindness, to give pleasure to the friend who relieves, &c. can be distinctly stated. Ingratitude is expressed by many strong metaphors, as *zana-baratra*, "son of a thunderbolt," probably alluding to the fable of a meteoric stone (thunderbolt) being carried very carefully by an aged female into her house, placed near the fire, and, there bursting, occasioning considerable injury to the old lady and her habitation; *zana-dralambo*, "offspring of a wild boar," because it is affirmed that the young boar, when running by the side of its dam, continually gets before her, and turns round to bite its parent. To be avaricious, is expressed by *mahihitra*, "grasping at;" and sometimes by *antanamamba*, "in the hand of a crocodile." Such characters are regarded as odious, and are deprecated in the public proclamations.

Apathy, want of decision, and excessive indolence, characterize, very generally, the natives of Madagascar; and these, with the oppressions of the government, may be regarded as the fruitful sources of much of the extreme poverty that prevails in the country, and of many of the seasons of famine from which they suffer so severely. The mass of the people seem alike destitute of forethought and enterprise, and hence are unprepared for any failure of their crops, and unable to extricate themselves from any unforeseen calamity. Nothing is a greater impediment to the advancement of civilization than indolence; and nothing shows this more distinctly than the state of starvation in which the people are sometimes found, while a small amount of labour on the rich soil of the country around them, would have supplied provision in abundance for a greatly augmented population. They are also far from being cleanly in their persons, and bathe but seldom.

Mr. Hastie states, that their passions are never violently excited; that they are not quick in avenging injuries, but cherish for a long time the desire of revenge for the most trifling insults, while they rejoice or exult in the distress of others. In obedience to their rulers, they are influenced by fear, and, when gathered in large numbers, have been seen to look upon distress and death with perfect indifference; or, if any feeling has been manifest, it has often been that of pleasure. The public executions exhibit more painfully, not only the absence of all the finer sensibilities of our nature, but the worse than brutalized state of the public mind. The unhappy victims of the treacherous ordeal of poisoned water, when declared guilty, are savagely dragged away, their bodies mutilated in a most horrid manner, or they are hurled down a fearful precipice, in the presence of multitudes of spectators, who look on without the least emotion of pity; while the children who have mingled with the crowd, amuse themselves by throwing stones at the lifeless bodies, which the dogs are rending to pieces.

Amidst so much that is opposed to every dictate of humanity, we notice with pleasure any indication of more generous feelings; and besides the sensibilities of this order already mentioned, few are more conspicuous than their love of country. With rare exceptions, they always leave their homes under great depression of spirits. It has been observed by Mr. Hastie, and others who have accompanied them on their military and other expeditions, that many become exceedingly melancholy if the period of return be delayed; and it is supposed, that some fall victims to their love of home. The Hovas often, when setting out on a journey, take with them a small portion of their native earth, on which they often gaze when absent, and invoke their god that they may be permitted to return to restore it to the place from which it was taken. But when returning from a foreign land to their native island, or from a distant province to their own, every countenance beams with gladness, they seem to be strangers to fatigue, and seek, by singing and dancing on their way, to give vent to the fulness of their joy.

But even in these circumstances of grateful pleasure, their hardheartedness is strikingly exhibited. As the army approaches the capital, or the province of Ankova, many of the relatives of the soldiers hasten to meet them, travelling sometimes ten or twenty miles. When they meet the cordial salutation and affectionate embrace, the rubbing of the feet of the returning soldier presents a most delightful scene; but in contrast with this may be seen the agonizing grief of those who now learn that a son, a brother, a husband, or a friend, will return no more; they dishevel their hair, and give utterance to their distress in loud and mournful lamentations; but this excites no attention, and calls forth no kindly sympathy, from those around them who are placed in happier circumstances.

Duplicity has been represented as the most conspicuous trait in the moral character of some of the races. It is remarkable that there are in the native language more words to express the various modes of deceiving, than any other vice. The natives will invent the most specious pretences, and assume the most plausible air, to impose on the credulity of others, and ingratiate themselves into favour, while their real design is hid for weeks and months in their own bosoms. If they wish to make a request, they will preface it by so complimentary a speech, and so many thanks and blessings for a kindness yet to be done, and by such servile flattery for a virtue to be illustrated in the forthcoming gift, that one might imagine the whole nation a tribe of sycophants, or minions of a court. It is said to be often impossible to understand their object for an hour or more, as they will talk on the most apparently dissimilar subjects, but with a visible restlessness, until, after all the windings of plausibility are travelled through, they hit, as if by accident, on the point designed from the beginning. It is remarkable, that this characteristic equally distinguishes all public proceedings. Every petition to the sovereign is prefaced by a long prologue of flattery and servility, when the petition is made to close the address often in the following words: "And since this is finished, since the introduction is accomplished, we have to beg and petition," &c. &c. Every answer to a proclamation of the sovereign asking advice of the chieftains, is commenced by an eloquent but hackneyed detail of their sovereign's royal pedigree, supremacy, equity, &c. The sovereign also usually smooths the way for any unpalateable declaration by a little of the oil of flattery previously poured into the people's ears, calling them "the ancient soot," (which has adhered for generations to the house of their ancestors,*) and the "under the day," the "under the the sky," &c. to which many other illustrations might be added.

In bartering, every trader asks, at least, twice as much as he intends to take; and they never forget to boast of any instances of successful fraud. The best sign of genius in children is esteemed a quickness to deceive, overreach and cheat. The people delight in fabulous tales, but in none so much or universally as in those that relate instances of successful deceit or fraud, though involving loss of life, as well as of property, to the injured person.

Lying is a common vice among all. To lie, is esteemed clever and pleasant, and more likely to serve one's purpose of interest or pleasure than to tell truth. In short, their constant aim is, in business to swindle, in professed friendship to extort, and in mere conversation to exaggerate and fabricate. The laws regard the testimony of witnesses as a part of circumstantial evidence, to be opposed by contrary testimony or evidence. Lying, has in some cases, been enforced on the natives, it having been required of every Hova, when speaking with foreigners on political matters, to state the exact opposite to truth, on pain of punishment. So far has this been carried, that it was once a serious and public complaint against Christianity, that it taught the people to scruple at telling lies, even to deceive their country's enemies.

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* The native houses in Madagascar having no chimneys, and the door and window affording the only means of escape for the smoke arising from the fires which are kindled on the floor of the house, the soot collects on the inner side of the roofs of their dwellings, where it is never disturbed by the people, who consider it a badge of honourable ancestry to have large quantities of soot hanging, frequently in long black shreds, from the roof of their dwelling.

Many of the Malagasy seem to think expediency determines the character of actions, and act as if they had no perception of what is vicious. The laws, publicly proclaimed, define vice; and there are terms for depravity, guilt, error, &c. and it appears that from these, and proverbial admonitory sayings, the people derive their ideas of what is right or wrong. But whilst the baneful influence of degeneracy of heart, and long familiarity with sin, have been such as to lead them to regard theft, and other acts of darker moral turpitude, as almost harmless, innumerable ceremonial observances are enjoined as duty, and the neglect of them regarded as criminal.

Idolatry, wherever it prevails, leads to this gross perversion of all correct moral sentiments and feelings, by ascribing all calamities to declared errors of conduct, such as eating certain herbs, sitting in a certain posture, &c.; and satisfying itself by endeavouring to remove all evil, and attain all good, by mere external observances, often absurd in themselves, and worse than useless to those who perform them.

CHAP. VI.

Manners and customs of the Malagasy—Their general uniformity throughout the different tribes—Observances connected with the birth of children—Attentions shewn to the mother—Ceremonies observed on first taking the infant out of the house—Employment of the sikidy to ascertain its destiny—Proportion of the sexes—Practice of scrambling—Bestowment of names—Fearful prevalence of infanticide—Motives to its perpetration—Means by which it is effected—Circumstances in which it differs from the infant-murder formerly practised by the South Sea Islanders—Fondness of parents for the children that are spared—Amusements of childhood—Occupations of youth—The custom of betrothing—Ages at which marriages are celebrated—Ceremonies observed—Parties between whom marriage is prohibited—Polygamy; its extent and disastrous effects—Divorce; its frequency—Usual mode of proceeding in divorce—Disposal of the children—Degraded condition of the female sex.

Next to the physical, moral, and intellectual peculiarities of the Malagasy, their manners, customs, institutions, and usages are subjects of inquiry and interest; and in proceeding to offer a brief sketch of the more conspicuous and remarkable of these, it may not be improper to observe, that the accounts refer chiefly to the customs and usages which obtain amongst the inhabitants of the interior provinces. A description of the peculiar observances of the different tribes would be as uninteresting as it is unnecessary, since a general resemblance is manifest in all. If, however, the inhabitants of different parts of the island have not respectively their own customs, they have their modes of observing the national customs. In the general character of their usages there is great uniformity;

the variety chiefly respects their minor circumstances, and in this respect resembles the diversity that may be noticed in their language. The language is one—the dialects differ. In the same manner, the general customs are alike, but vary in their details according to different localities, and, if the expression may be allowed, the customs have their "provincialisms." Some of the clans or families are also more scrupulous than others in maintaining unimpaired their own peculiar observances, adhering most servilely to the wisdom of their ancestors. Innovation and injury are in their minds inseparable, and the idea of improvement altogether inadmissible. To these opinions principally is to be attributed that remarkable uniformity which prevails in many of their habits and sentiments, where otherwise they would exhibit considerable variety.

The present inhabitants are, as already observed, evidently derived from more than one nation, and have, as might reasonably be expected, a diversity of customs corresponding with their distinct sources. It ought to be remembered also, that they never, in point of fact, constituted one entire nation—were never brought under one individual sovereign—but have, from a period of remote antiquity, probably from the arrival of the earliest settlers, consisted of distinct races or tribes under independent chieftains, and have consequently never been subjected to the assimilating influence of a government deriving its authority and power from one source, and pervading by a uniform policy the different tribes comprised in the nation.

Notwithstanding the effects which these causes might be expected to produce, it will appear that the distinguishing usages of the nation pervade every part of the island. Thus all practise circumcision, but the ceremonies attending it are varied. All practise trial by ordeal, but the ordeal itself, and the mode of its administration, differ. All employ the sikidy, or divination, but have different modes of working it. The same division of the year into twelve moons is universal, but the moons are designated by different names, one class of names being used by the inhabitants of the coast, another by those of the interior. All have the singular and remarkakle practice of observing one day in the week as more sacred, favoured of the gods, or more lucky, than the rest: some, however, regard Friday as that day, others Saturday, and others Sunday. These instances are sufficient to shew that a description of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of one portion of the island will be, in all its essential features, applicable to the whole.

Besides the causes already assigned for this general uniformity in the usages of the distinct races of inhabitants, that uniformity has undoubtedly often been preserved, and the usages themselves in many instances perpetuated, by that aversion to change which operates so powerfully in all nations under despotic and weak governments, with which it is a chief maxim of policy to perpetuate, unaltered from age to age, the manners and habits of the people. To think or act otherwise than their ancestors have thought and acted for them, would manifest an independence of mind and action alarming to the despot by whom they may be governed, and would evince an amount of intelligence that in these circumstances has rarely been obtained, and has but seldom been deemed, by the people themselves, either desirable or practicable.

As education elevates the mind, and enlarges the range of thought and sentiment, and as knowledge and civilization advance in the country, some of these observances will gradually sink into desuetude, and in a slight degree there is reason to believe a change is already in progress in those parts of the country where foreigners have been accustomed to reside or visit.

In noticing the manners and customs of the Malagasy, we commence with their habits and usages in social life, and direct our attention to the circumstances of their infancy, childhood, and youth.

In this department of their manners and customs, there are many observances peculiar and interesting, blended with others that excite intense and very mingled feelings. We behold much that is grateful to a humane and an enlightened mind, as well as unusual in what is generally termed barbarous or uncivilized society, with much that is so repulsive to every dictate of humanity and virtue, that the union of practices so opposite among the same people presents an anomaly in human society as remarkable as it is distressing.

Thus, in regard to their offspring in general, the Malagasy are fond of children; to have a numerous family, is a source of satisfaction to the parents, and of honourable esteem in the community. It is, however, a source of satisfaction far from being general, as few, comparatively speaking, have large families, and a far greater number are strangers to the happiness of being parents, than in more civilized society. This is probably to be ascribed, in a great degree, to the gross immorality that prevails among all classes from early youth, and is the source of so much of their depravity and suffering.

In those families, however, wherein the enjoyments of parentage are known, as the period approaches at which a Malagasy wife expects to become a mother, she not only takes additional care of herself, "as nature dictates," but is encouraged to do so by the prevailing dispositions and usages of the people. The husband, under these circumstances, excepting where cruelty and vice have brutalized his nature, is also more than usually attentive and kind,* and, influenced by the fond emotions which the anticipation of parental affection excites, a number of little preparations are made to indicate the tenderness with which the infant will be welcomed, and to meet the exigencies of the occasion.

As the period of accouchement draws near, a temporary apartment is prepared within the dwelling-house, and near the fire-place, by fixing posts in the floor, which is of earth, and forming partitions by fastening thick mats to these posts; a space sufficiently large for the purpose designed is thus enclosed, the chief furniture of which consists of a mattress of straw placed on the floor, a brisk fire is at the same time kept up within the houes, but on the outside of this apartment, in connexion with these preparations. A short time before her confinement, the female undergoes a ceremony of purification by her intended nurse, as essential to her safety, and feasting is a general accompaniment of this and other preparatory observances, as it is in nearly every ceremony.

Practitioners (mpampivelona, *i. e.* those that cause to live, midwives) are always females; not that delicacy and refinement are characteristic traits of the people, but custom has established the rule that her own sex alone

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There are, however, cases in which the heartless and sordid husband, unwilling to bear the trifling expenses, or endure the slight inconvenience, that may be occasioned by the confinement of his wife, and the support and care of his child, publicly divorces her as soon as there is reason to expect she will become a mother, even though there should not exist the remotest suspicion of her fidelity; and so debased are public morals, that the laws sanction divorce for such a cause, and public feeling attaches no odium to the conduct of the unfeeling husband.

should be present in "the hour of nature's sorrow." Unqualified as these may be to render efficient aid in any critical exigency, the season is fatal to but few of the Malagasy mothers. The instances in which there is any deviation from the ordinary course of nature, or in which the life of the infant has become extinct before its entrance into the world, are but rare; and though on these occasions enlightened scientific aid might very frequently avert any serious results, the death of the mother generally ensues.

The birth of a child is in general considered as an occasion of rejoicing to the parents and relations; and the feeling is extended in proportion to the rank or station of the parties. Among the pretended demonstrations of joy on the birth of a child, a custom established by long usage formerly prevailed, so characteristic of a barbarous and licentious people, so repugnant to every feeling of decency, that anything beyond the most brief allusion would be disgusting, yet a slight reference to it seems essential to fidelity. An occasion for its manifestation occurred on the birth of the late king's daughter.

The town, by reason of the scenes which the streets and lanes almost everywhere exhibited, appeared like one vast brothel, and the period was called, Andro-tsy-maty, *i. e.* a time in which the law could not condemn, or in which death could not be inflicted. The death of three chief nobles of high rank occurring at the time, Mr. Hastie, the British agent at the capital, in remonstrating with the king against the grossness of these proceedings, alluded, apparently with good effect, to the death of the chiefs, as perhaps designed to shew the displeasure of the Almighty against such wickedness. Mr. Hastie also expressed his utter detestation of the scenes of abomination then exhibited, and stated, that if it was ever permitted again, it should be published in the Mauritius Gazette, whereby it would be known throughout Europe and the world—that the people of England would exclaim, "What a brute of a king is Radama!—that they would not allow their agent or representative to remain any longer in such a country—and that he should be recalled. The love of fame was one of Radama's strongest passions, and it is said, that on this occasion he was affected to tears, and took the most prompt and energetic measures for preventing the recurrence of practices which he had thus been led to consider as exposing him to contempt and shame.

On the queen's entry into the capital with her infant, a fortnight afterwards, when similar outrages were expected, a strict prohibition, issued by the king, was very generally regarded; two culprits only were brought before the judges the next morning, and, being found guilty of disobeying the order of the king, were immediately executed.

After the birth of an infant, the relatives and friends of the mother visit her, and offer their congratulations. The infant also receives salutations, in form resembling the following: "Saluted be the offspring given of God!—may the child live long!—may the child be favoured so as to possess wealth!" Presents are also made to the attendants in the household, and sometimes a bullock is killed on the occasion, and distributed among the members of the family. Presents of poultry, fuel, money, &c., are at times also sent by friends to the mother. A piece of meat is usually cut into thin slices, and suspended at some distance from the floor by a cord attached to the ceiling or roof of the house. This is called the Kitoza, and is intended for the mother. A fire is kept in the room, day and night, frequently for a week after the birth of the child.

At the expiration of that period, the infant, arrayed in the best clothing that can be obtained, is carried out of the house by some person whose parents are *both still living*, and then taken back to the mother. In being carried out and in, the child must be twice carefully lifted over the fire, which is placed near the door. Should the infant be a boy, the axe, large knife, and spear, generally used in the family, must be taken out at the same time, with any implements of building that may be in the house: silver chains, of native manufacture, are also given as presents, or used in these ceremonies, for which no particular reason is assigned. The implements are perhaps used chiefly as emblems of the occupations in which it is expected the infant will engage when it arrives at maturer years; and the whole may be regarded as expressing the hopes cherished of his activity, wealth, and enjoyments.

One of the first acts of the father, or a near relative, is to report the birth of the child to the native divines or astrologers, who are required to work the sikidy for the purpose of ascertaining and declaring its destiny; and when the destiny is declared to be favourable, the child is nurtured with that tenderness and affection which nature inspires, and the warmest gratulations are tendered by the friends of the parents.

The proportion of the sexes appears to be equal at birth, though, in consequence of the destructive ravages of war, it is supposed by the Missionaries, that in some of the provinces there are, among the free portion of the inhabitants, five, and in others three women to one man. The adult slave population presents a more equal number of both sexes. The children, particularly those of the Hovas, are said to be exceedingly fair at their birth, and to assume but very gradually the dark or olive tinge of those in riper years.

At the expiration of the second or third month from the birth of a first child, on a day declared to be good (lucky) by the sikidy, a peculiar kind of ceremony takes place, called "scrambling." The friends and relatives of the child assemble; a portion of the fat taken from the hump on the back of an ox is minced in a rice-pan, cooked, and mixed up with a quantity of rice, milk, honey, and a sort of grass called voampamoa; a lock of the infant's hair is also cast into the above mélange;* and the whole being thoroughly well mixed in a rice-pan, which is held by the youngest female of the family, a general rush is made towards the pan, and a scramble for its contents takes place, especially by the women, as it is supposed that those who are fortunate enough to obtain a portion may confidently cherish the hope of becoming mothers. Bananas, lemons, and sugarcane are also scrambled for, under the belief that a similar result may be anticipated.

The ceremony of scrambling, however, only takes place with a first-born child. The head of the mother is decorated during the ceremonial with silver chains, while the father carries the infant, if a boy, and some ripe bananas, on his back. The rice-pan used on the occasion becomes in their estimation sacred by the service, and must not be taken out of the house during three subsequent days, otherwise the virtue of those observances is supposed to be lost.

With regard to names, the parents bestow such as they think proper on their offspring; but usually among the Malagasy, as among most uncivilized tribes, the names are descriptive, and are bestowed without any ceremonies.

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* A lock of hair is first cut on the left side of the child's head, and called sonia ratsy, "the evil lock;" this must be thrown away, in order to avert calamity: another lock is then cut, on the right side, this is called sonia soa, "the fortunate lock," and is used as above described.

The names first given are by many retained through life, but are by others exchanged for names descriptive of some particular circumstance, relationship, or event. There are also certain generic names applied to children, for which they often receive others in after years; thus, for example, a boy is called Ikoto, or Rakota, "the lad;" a female, Raketaka, "the girl." The first-born female in a family is generally designated Ramatoa, "eldest female," and the last Ra-fara-vavy, "last born female." The first-born male, Lahimatoa, "first-male," and the last Ra-fara-lahy, or Andriampaivo, or Lahi-zandrina "the younger;" any female born between the first and the last is called Ra-ivo "the intermediate," and any male between the eldest and the youngest, Andrianivo "intermediate male," or Lah-ivo. As these terms respectively signify the circumstances stated, the children do not necessarily take the name of the parents, and from this cause also, almost every family in a town has children of the same names. Parents sometimes assume the name of their children, especially should they rise to distinction in public service, as Rai-ni-Mahay, "Father of Mahay," Rai-ni-Maka, "Father of Maka."

In connexion with the above usages, referring to the periods of infancy and childhood among the Malagasy, it is requisite to notice others of an opposite and melancholy character—the destruction of life, and the practice of infanticide. In families above the lowest grade in society, as little expense is incurred in providing for the maintenance of children, and but little trouble occasioned by additions to the domestic circle, children generally find a welcome, even though a merciless and gloomy superstition, professing to divine the future destiny of the unconscious, unoffending infants, should, shortly after their entrance into the world, require them to be destroyed. It is not, however, after birth alone that the destruction of life takes place. This species of murder is effected at times for the purpose of avoiding the disgrace to which the violation of moral propriety would expose the guilty parties, and in some instances from the same shameful motives which occasionally operated formerly among the natives of the South Sea islands—the fear of having too large a family: the destruction of life before birth, from the latter consideration, occurs, however, but rarely, and in general a numerous offspring is a source of much satisfaction. Notwithstanding this, the horrible crime of child-murder has prevailed from time immemorial, and in some parts of the country is perpetrated still.

During the reign of Radama, the inhuman practice of infanticide received a powerful and salutary check, especially near the seat of government, and within the range of his personal influence. He presented an instance of opposition to it in his own family, as an example, and humanely promulgated laws prohibiting, under the severest penalties, a practice alike opposed to the highest interest of the nation and the best and strongest feelings of humanity. He manifested on this occasion the strong and shrewd faculty of wisdom with which he was so eminently endowed, and proceeded to the accomplishment of his object in a manner of all others most adapted to remove the superstitious prejudices, and engage the assistance of the parents themselves. This barbarous murder was only committed on those infants whose fate the pagan astrologers of the country declared required it. Radama, in prohibiting their destruction, declared that all the infants doomed to death by the astrologers became his, and that whoever destroyed them destroyed his children, and should suffer death for the murder of the children of the king.

This enactment not only furnished the parents with abundant ground for disobedience to the dictate of the diviners, but, by giving to their offspring the flattering designation of the king's children, gratified their vanity, and secured their co-operation. During the reign of Radama, the practice was generally discontinued, except in Imamo, where, in surrendering their independence and acknowledging his supremacy, the inhabitants stipulated for the unmolested continuance of this unnatural crime, according to the custom of their ancestors. The extensive revival of the ancient superstitions of the country, and of this among the rest, since the death of Radama, has not diminished, but increased the number thus prematurely hurried to the grave.

The superstitions of the Malagasy lead them to regard certain days and hours as unlucky, and for an infant to be born at such times is considered fatal. These periods are calculated and declared by a class of men called Panandro, "astrologers." To these the relations or the parent of a new-born infant repair almost immediately after it has entered the world, to learn from them the *vintana*, or destiny of the child, as if they could not give free current to the tide of their joyous and affectionate feelings until they had ascertained whether those feelings must be suppressed, and the object of their kindling emotions be recklessly torn from their embrace, or whether they might venture to express towards it their tenderness and love.

In some cases it is considered sufficient to make a prescribed offering with a special view to averting the evil of the child's destiny. The parents' hopes being by this confirmed, they return to indulge in the overflowings of their joy over the dear object of which a murderous superstition has not deprived them. In other cases there must be exposure to death, or death must be inflicted. *

The decisions of the panandro are three-fold: either a faditra, or offering, must be presented, to remove evil; the child must be exposed to death, by being placed in the narrow path at the entrance to a village or a cattle-fold; or it must be put to death. When the vintana or destiny is declared to be favourable, no ceremony follows. If the decision be unfavourable, (a not unfrequent case,) there is ground for but very feeble hopes of the infant's life; yet still the affectionate parents fondly cherish these hopes as long as there is the least prospect of their being realized.

The tendency of all the systems of absurd and degrading superstition which enslave and afflict mankind, is to triumph in fiendlike despotism over the first, the strongest, and tenderest dictates of humanity; yet, perhaps, amidst the various exhibitions of its malignant domination, it does not unfold a scene of more affecting wretchedness than is presented on these occasions. An infant, a new-born, perfectly helpless, unconscious infant, smiling perhaps in innocence, is laid on the ground in the narrow entrance to a village, or a fold, through which there is scarcely room enough for cattle to pass; several cattle are then driven violently in, and are made to pass over the spot in which the child is placed, while the parents with agonizing feelings stand by waiting the result.

If the oxen pass over without injuring the infant, the omen is propitious, the powerful and evil destiny is removed, the parents may without apprehension embrace their offspring, and cherish it as one rescued from destruction.

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* Further explanation respecting the calculation of destiny will be given in a subsequent part of the work.

But should the delicate, frail, and tender body of the helpless victim be mangled and crushed to death by the rugged feet of the oxen, which is most frequently the case, the parents return to mourn in bitterness of grief their loss, with no other consolation than that which the monstrous absurdities of their delusions supply—that, had their beloved infant survived, it would have been exposed to the influence of that destiny which now required its exposure to destruction.

Distressing, however, as this is, it is in some respects less so than the practice which remains to be noticed. This refers to the instances in which it is declared that exposure will not be sufficient, that there is no possibility of avoiding the doom pronounced, and that death must be inflicted. No labour would secure exemption for the hapless victim; no offering or sacrifice could propitiate the powers on whom its destiny depended, and avert its destruction; no treasures could purchase for it permission to live; and those who otherwise would have cherished it with the tenderest affection, and have fostered it with unceasing care through infancy and childhood, are reduced to the dire necessity of extinguishing that life which the dictates of nature would have taught them to regard as equally precious with their own. When this inhuman decision of the astrologers has been announced, the death of the innocent victim is usually effected by suffocation; the rice-pan, a circular wooden utensil, slightly concave on one side and hollow on the other, is generally employed. It is filled with water, and the infant is held with its face downwards in the water, till life becomes extinct; sometimes a piece of cloth is placed on the child's mouth, to render its suffocation more speedy. The remains of the infant thus murdered, are buried on the *south* side of the parents' house, that being superstitiously regarded as the part appropriated to what is ill-omened and fatal. The parents then rub a small quantity of red earth into their clothes, and afterwards shake them, as if to avert or shake off from themselves the evil supposed to attend their slight and transient contact with that which had been doomed to destruction.

Another mode of perpetrating this unnatural deed is by taking the infant to a retired spot in the neighbourhood of the village, digging a grave sufficiently large to receive it, pouring in a quantity of water slightly warmed, putting a piece of cloth upon the infant's mouth, placing it in the grave, filling this up with earth, and leaving the helpless child, thus buried alive, a memorial of their own affecting degradation, and the relentless barbarism of their gloomy superstition—a trophy of the dominion of the destroyer of our race, and a painfully conclusive illustration of the truth of that word which declares that the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

These heart-rending transactions are generally performed by the parents themselves, or some of the nearest kindred of the family, frequently by the father, while the mother, anxious to press her infant to her bosom as long as possible, holds it while preparations for the savage deed are going forward, and when it is taken from her arms, to be consigned thus prematurely to the earth, gives vent to her anguish and distress by lamenting and weeping, in which she is joined by her female kindred and companions, who return with her in sad procession to her dwelling.

It is affecting to contemplate the extent to which the unnatural practice of child-murder prevails in almost every nation in a state of heathenism, whether learned or illiterate, civilized or barbarous, and to notice the resemblance in motive and end, as well as in the manner of effecting it, which appear among communities the most remote, and in many respects dissimilar, from each other.

The South Sea islanders seem to have been much more addicted to infanticide than the Malagasy; the chief cause of its perpetration by the former was pride, and their abominable licentiousness; to some extent, however, they were influenced by the motives which operated on the latter—the sanctions of their heartless superstitions, and the desire to avoid the trouble of taking care of their offspring.

The mode also of accomplishing their purpose was frequently the same, but there was one peculiar feature in the infanticide of the South Sea islanders, from which the Malagasy were exempt; among the latter, no distinction appears to have been made on account of sex; both appear to have been alike exposed to the merciless decisions of the astrologers. Among the former, the relentless deed was regulated frequently by considerations that tended to destroy the female sex, and add to the atrocity of the crime. A far grearer number of females than of males were destroyed by the islanders, and often the circumstance which decided the guilty parties in the accomplishment of their purpose, before undetermined, was the fact that the innocent victim was a female.

The infant which a barbarous and sanguinary superstition has spared to the Malagasy parents, is cherished with indulgent tenderness; its aliment is supplied, with exceedingly rare exceptions, from its mother's breast; and it is generally nursed by a grandmother, or some other relative. The mothers in Madagascar often suckle their children for several years; the latter thus continue "children at the breast" after they are able to walk, and may often be seen running after their mothers, and, without any hesitation, calling out and asking for their accustomed indulgence.

Nothing can exceed the affection with which the infant is treated by its parents, and other members of the family; the indulgence is more frequently carried to excess than otherwise; and it is pleasing to record the testimony of those who have dwelt among the people, that instances are numerous, in which the affection of the parents has been reciprocated by the children, many of whom have been known to love and honour their parents even to old age.

The fathers generally carry their little boys on their shoulders, where the latter are seated erect, and held by the father's hand. Mothers carry their children, according to the usages of the country, on their backs, or at their side, resting on their hip; and a custom prevails in the island, which marks in a pleasing manner the operation of filial affection;—children are in the habit of occasionally presenting their mothers with a piece of money called fofon-damosina, "the remembrance of the back," as a sort of grateful acknowledgment for the kindness of the parent in having so often borne the infant on the back.

Though filial affection is rarely seen where enlightened and judicious parental discipline is not uniformly manifested, the latter is almost unknown in many parts of Madagascar, and is even, where it prevails, exceedingly lax. The children are not subjected to the least restraint, but are, as soon as able to act for themselves, allowed to follow their own inclinations, except so far as their daily wants render them dependent upon their parents, by whom the wishes or caprice of the child is rather humoured than resisted or controlled. Lax, however, as parental restraint certainly is, continued stubbornness and disobedience is sometimes severely punished. The power of parents over the liberty of their child, is universally acknowledged; and parents are permitted by the judges to sell disobedient and stubborn children into slavery—instances of which have occurred.

Whatever jealousies may render the wives of one husband miserable, or whatever envying and strife may exist between the children of the wife and those of the concubines, it is pleasing to contemplate the Malagasy home as one that is imbittered by few quarrels between parents and children. The former maintain the authority of their relation, so far as it is exercised, without sufficiently, or, in many cases, at all curbing the early development of youthful passions; the children, however, are taught from their infancy to cherish respect for their parents, and the aged, as one of the first obligations in society.

The amusements of the children are few, and resemble on a smaller scale those of the adults. Bull-fighting is one of those held in highest estimation among the latter; and the children spend many of their hours in cruelly setting beetles to fight, and in watching them while employed in destroying each other. The period devoted to the pastimes of childhood is but short, and the boys and girls are accustomed, at a very early age, frequently before the sixth or seventh year is completed, to engage in the occupations of their parents respectively.

At the ages above referred to, viz. six or seven years, the girls may be seen fetching water for domestic uses, and the boys assisting their fathers in agricultural pursuits, carrying rice-plants, manioc, sugarcanes, and other productions for the field, or bearing towards their villages bundles of dried grass, &c. used as fuel at home. In Imerina many about that age were, while the schools were patronized by the government, placed under instruction, and when approaching what is deemed among the people the age of maturity, viz. from fourteen to eighteen years, great numbers were taken into the army. Where this is not the case, as soon as a youth is able to serve the purposes of the government, he is expected to form his own domestic establishment, to perform his share of all public services, and bear his portion of the taxes, and other public burdens of the people. When this takes place, if the lands of the father are sufficient, a section is given to the son as his portion; but when the possessions of the father will not admit of this, land is purchased for the son, usually at a low rate, the price seldom exceeding six or seven dollars per acre.

The practice of betrothing children at a very early age prevails to a great extent in Madagascar; the parents frequently make an arrangement for their children with a view to their marriage, before the latter are capable of thinking for themselves on the subject. These are considered as voa-fofo, "betrothed" or "pledged." In other cases, young persons think and judge for themselves. Domestic manners in Madagascar do not impose the restraints usual in most Oriental countries; very frequent opportunities therefore occur in the social intercourse of families, for young persons of both sexes to see each other, and, as elsewhere, love and courtship precede matrimony. Usually, however, such alliances are formed on the arrangements of the parents, and not unfrequently through their influence. Many of both sexes are married at the age of twelve or fourteen. These sometimes continue to live with their parents, though they more frequently form separate establishments for themselves. Shortly after the ages above specified, they frequently become parents.

The ceremonies in marriage are neither numerous nor imposing, neither is the bond indissoluble.

Certain ranks are not permitted under any circumstances to intermarry, and affinity to the sixth generation also forbids intermarriage, yet the principal restrictions against intermarriages respect descendants on the female side. Collateral branches on the male side are permitted in most cases to intermarry, on the observance of a slight but prescribed ceremony, which is supposed to remove the impediment or disqualification arising out of consanguinity. This preference for preserving uncontaminated the female line, and the custom of tracing the genealogy of the sovereign and the nobles by the female, and not by the male line, involves a censure on the existing morals of the country; since they proceed on the supposition of its being impossible in any given case to ascertain with certainty the male parent of a child, or, that parentage is more easily and obviously identified on the mother's than on the father's side.*

Among the parties prohibited from intermarrying, may be noticed,

First, as to caste, grade, or rank :—

1. A noble may not marry a Hova.

2. A Hova may not marry a Zaza-hova, i. e. a Hova reduced to slavery.

3. A Zaza-hova may not marry an Andevo, i. e. slave; viz., a slave not originally a Hova.

A freeman cannot marry a slave, but he can raise her to a state of freedom by redeeming her, and then he may marry her. He may afterwards divorce her, but in that case she continues free.*

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* An unmarried queen is supposed to have the right of having a family by whom she may think proper. The children are recognized as legitimately royal by their relation to the mother, and no question made as to paternity.

Secondly, as to consanguinity:—

1. Brother and sister by the same father and mother.

2. Children of a brother and sister by the same parents, (unless the ceremony, already referred to, be performed.)

3. Grandchildren of a brother and sister by the same parents, (under a similar restriction.)

Their descendants may intermarry *ad libitum.*

4. The children of two sisters by the same mother cannot intermarry, nor their descendants, viz.:—

5. Grandchildren.

6. Great-grandchildren.

7. Great-great-grandchildren.

8. Great-great-great-grandchildren.

These two last are respectively called Zafindokalika and Zafimpaladia; i. e. "descendants of the knee," and "descendants of the sole of the foot."

Mothers in Madagascar being usually anxious to have their daughters married while the latter are very young, most connexions of this kind, therefore, which take place among young persons, may be appropriately designated early marriages. Sometimes the parents give with their daughter a dowry consisting of cattle, slaves, or money; which, in the event of a divorce, is claimed by them on her behalf. This, however, is not always the case, as the bridegroom occasionally, when his circumstances or those of his parents are more affluent than those of the bride, gives such portion to his wife as may have been previously agreed upon between his friends and her parents.

The ceremonies observed on entering into the marriage relation are not uniform, though always exceedingly simple:

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* Exodus xxi. 7, 10; Deut. xxi. 11, 14.

they depend, in a measure, on the rank and wealth of the parties. Feasting generally accompanies every Malagasy marriage. When the preliminaries are determined, and the time fixed, viz., a good or lucky day, according to the sikidy, the relatives of the bride and bridegroom meet at the houses of the parents of the respective parties. All are attired in their best apparel, and decorated with their gayest ornaments. At the appointed hour, the relatives or friends of the bridegroom accompany him to the house of the bride. These pay or receive the dowry, which being settled, he is welcomed by the bride as her future husband; they eat together, are recognized by the senior members of the family as husband and wife; a benediction is pronounced upon them, and a prayer offered to God, that they may have a numerous offspring, abundance of cattle, many slaves, great wealth, and increase the honour, of their respective families. They then repair to the house of the parents or friends of the bridegroom, and again eat together, when similar benedictions are pronounced by the senior members of the family, or the head man of the village, who is usually invited to the ceremony.

The nuptial bond is, in some instances, now regarded as complete; general feasting ensues, after which the parties return to their respective homes, and the newly-married couple to the residence prepared for them.

But if, as is generally the case, the houses in which the parties have met is below the hill on which their village is built, the bride is placed on a sort of chair under a canopy, and borne on men's shoulders up the sides of the hill to the centre of the village. Occasionally the bridegroom is carried in the same manner. The relatives and friends of the parties follow in procession, clapping their hands, and singing, as the bearers ascend. On reaching the village, they halt at what is called the parent-house, or residence of the officer of the government; a hasina, or piece of money, is given to the attending officer for the sovereign, the receiving of which is considered a legal official ratification of the engagement, as the marriage cannot afterwards be annulled, except by a legal act of divorce in the presence of witnesses. No ring, or other emblem of the married state, is used on such occasions, or worn afterwards; nor is there any badge by which the married may be distinguished from the unmarried women in Madagascar, when their husbands are at home: but during the absence of their husbands, especially in the service of government, a necklace, of silver rings or beads or braided hair, is worn, to denote that they are married, and that consequently their persons are sacred. Thus the wives of the officers composing the late embassy to England were distinguished during the absence of their husbands.

The early marriages of the Malagasy are attended with painful and disastrous effects to the female; especially those contracted in consequence of betrothments arranged by the parents, totally irrespective of the inclinations of the parties themselves, and often before they were able to understand the nature of the engagement, or feel either preference for or aversion to those with whom they were pledged to sustain one of the most binding and sacred relations of life. The consequence is, the unhappy wife soon ceases to please, the affections of the husband are fixed on others, and unfaithfulness or divorce is the result. Notwithstanding this, it is stated by those who have had the best opportunities of studying native society, that a number may be found faithfully and devotedly attached to each other through life. Instances of this kind, however, are comparatively rare: and concubinage, or polygamy, with all its inevitable train of miseries, prevails very generally.

The very term by which polygamy is designated in the native language implies the evils of which it is the fruitful source—famporafesana, i. e., "the means of causing enmity;"* as if referring to the interminable jealousies and hostilities created among the several wives of one husband. With all its admitted and numerous evils, polygamy, however, exists under the sanction of the highest examples and authorities a native can appeal to. Every monarch is complimented as having twelve wives: and most of the nobles or chieftains, who can afford to maintain a plurality of wives, deem it essential to their rank and honour, if not to their happiness, to take more than one wife.

The only law to regulate polygamy seems to be, that no man may take twelve wives excepting the sovereign. And while very many have but one, the cases are, however, comparatively few, in which a man has more than three or four. Custom has established various rules as to the manner in which a husband takes an additional wife. The following sketch is given as an illustration. It will not strictly and literally apply in every individual case, but such course of proceeding, or something extremely analogous to it, is usually followed.

The husband disposed to take an additional wife, selects his favourite, obtains her consent privately, without the knowledge of his wife. He then communicates his intention to the latter, probably at first in apparent jest; he afterwards tells her plainly, calling her, Rafotsy, (a title of respect,) you are to have a younger sister. I shall still make you happy, adds the husband; here is a present for you—five dollars, 'tis a large sum."

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* Rafy, signifies enmity; Rafy-lahy, an enemy; Mamporafy, to cause enmity; Mpamporafy, a causer of enmity, a polygamist; Famporafesana the cause of enmity, polygamy.

When the money is mentioned, the woman finds the affair is earnest, and then objects: "No, I shall not be one of two wives, let me be divorced." The husband employs pacific expressions, endeavours to abate her anger, and to obtain her consent; he assures her of his affection, and that he can by no means part with her, and expresses his astonishment that she could talk of a divorce. Still withholding her consent, he reminds her that it is the man's prerogative to have many wives, and a fine large house built on a hill, to remain there as a monument of his respectability. "Those who are inferior," he tells her, "wish to become equal, and those who are equal to become superior, that he who has one wishes for two, and he who has two wishes for three."

The poor wife now finding it best to be pacified, says that she is so, and replies, "Well, that is sufficient, since you are determined on the measure. 'Tis like the old proverb, 'Where the hill is long, there is room for thinking.' Since I am tired of refusing, I have consented; yet I wish you to consider, that I prefer speaking to you face to face rather than complaining of you to others. I shall not ask you to give me all I want, but I ask you, as pledge of your attachment to me, to give me a slave whom I may give to any one I please; then you may take any one you like as my junior, whether from a near or a distant tribe." A little bargaining takes place about the demand for a slave, and the wife repeats, that she merely asks, lest her children should cease to love her if she were poor. The husband then adds. "Here is half a slave for you,* but you are not

* That is, a right over half his services or half his value, if sold or redeemed.

to give him away if you continue beloved by your children.

These preliminaries arranged, the parents, if living, and relations of both parties, are invited to assemble, and the husband's brother usually states the terms of the agreement. "You are all invited, that you may be informed of the present made to Rafotsy, namely, the half slave." The husband's father then adds, "half the slave belongs to my daughter-in-law. Do you agree to that? Half a slave, for which you have not toiled nor laboured—this is thine." The father, mother, and relatives of the wife express their assent, and compliment the husband. The husband rejoins, "I am pleased with what you have said, and now I shall add to the donation. How much? Three dollars." All parties consent, unanimity prevails, Rafotsy herself, won by so much kindness and liberality, remarks, "That will do, I seem to have a father indeed to my children." All the family join then in some exclamations of thanks, and call on god, and heaven and earth, sun and moon, east, west, and north, and deceased relations, to bless the man and his wife.

The husband then adds, "I shall give you all notice of a day when I intend to marry my second wife, lest you should say, Why have you been so silent, and done it so suddenly, without telling us?" A lucky day being accordingly fixed on, it is mentioned by the husband's brother, and the party breaks up with expressions of mutual good-will.

The first wife generally makes additional efforts to obtain a further donation from her husband, and often succeeds.

On the day fixed for introducing one wife to the other, the head people of the village are requested to act as the inter-messengers. They proceed to the house of the intended bride, who is called the vady kely, "the little wife."* "We have come," say they, "for the young lass—open the door." The lineage and ancestry of both parties are then related, and the donation of clothes sent being presented, the parties eat together as a token of friendship. The husband's brother brings the new wife, part of a sheep having been previously presented to her, and another part to the father of the first wife, with an apology that it is a mere trifle, but all that can be afforded. The new wife is then taken to the house of her intended husband, and is met in the court, west of the house,† by the husband and wife. This public situation is chosen, that all may witness the engagement, and that the husband may address the spectators, saying, "The terms of this marriage-covenant are half a slave and thirteen dollars." Eight had been named—five at first, and three afterwards—the rest is expended in clothing and feasting.

In some instances, money is taken to the sovereign, or his representative; and when this is received, the engagement is considered as ratified or legalized. The spectators then leave; and the polygamist, with both his wives, either continue to live in the same house, or a separate establishment is formed for the new wife. Generally, too, the custom obtains of the husband's soliciting a small portion of his first wife's rice-ground, which he presents to his vady-kely, and in return gives her another piece sometime afterwards, as a compensation.

Polygamy here, as elsewhere, is demonstrated to be a system of evils. It is the chief source of nearly all the domestic disputes and jealousies existing among the Malagasy: wives become jealous of one another, and the husband suffers from the jealousy of all.

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* A name given to every wife a man has, except the first.

† The front of the house, as the door faces the west.

The children by different wives are frequently the subjects of secret heart-burnings, or in open variance give vent to their malevolent feelings and recriminating animosities. Divorces are multiplied, and, with them, envy, hatred, and interminable family resentments. Property is also wasted, claimants are multiplied, and litigations frequent. In a word, polygamy is a curse to the land, and its final extinction is a consummation most ardently to be desired by all who prefer peace to wrath, affection to bitterness, domestic comfort to domestic strife, and christian virtues to the jealousy, malice, and uncharitableness of the excited and turbulent passions of depraved human nature.

One great evil consequent on polygamy is the frequency of divorce. This may naturally be expected where polygamy is sanctioned and encouraged. The former may indeed be permitted under some circumstances where the latter is not, as in European countries, but the latter so necessarily produces occasions of the former, that it perhaps could not exist without it.

The term used for it in the native language is fisaorambady. The verb misaotra, "to divorce," strictly signifies to *thank* or *bless*, and is used even as an expression of thanksgiving to the Divine Being. Its use in forming the compound word as above, (fisaorana and vady) seems to imply a benediction on the wife, thanking her for the past, and so gently dismissing her as one whose services are no longer required.

The immediate causes of divorce are numerous, and often very trivial. One cause for which a wife is heartlessly divorced has been already noticed; besides this, if a wife be cruel towards the step-children in a family, or children by another wife, or children whom the husband may have adopted, or if she be extravagant, or idle, or inattentive to her husband, or if she be suspected of infidelity to her husband, or of gadding about too much from house to house, or of receiving attention from the other sex, or if she accuse her husband justly or unjustly of infidelity towards his lawful wife or wives, or if she refuses her consent to his taking another wife—in all such cases she is divorced, and frequently on occasions of far less importance.

Usually when a dispute has taken place between the husband and wife, and a reconciliation has not been effected, the wife runs away to her parents or relations. Unless the husband be desirous of a separation, he employs persuasive means to induce her to return. In the event of not succeeding, or the separation being wished for, he commissions his brother or a friend to divorce her. Having obtained an interview with the female, he desires her to call her parents and relations, as he has some business to transact. On their arrival, and the customary salutations having passed, he announces the object of his visit, and sums it up briefly by saying, "I am sent to divorce this child," &c. Then addressing the woman, he says, "Your brother," (meaning her husband, but now designating him by a relationship which implies the impossibility of marriage,) "your brother says there is no more dispute nor difference between us, remember and count what property is your own, you may receive your own share." The father of the woman answers? "This is worthy of a husband; worthy of a friend indeed: he does not impose on us. May he live to grow old!"

With this the ceremony terminates, and the relations afterwards fetch the share of property belonging to the divorced party. The support and guardianship of the children of the divorced wife are made the subjects of arrangement by the friends of the respective parties before the separation is publicly announced; sometimes they are divided, sometimes left with the relatives of the father, at other times taken by those of the mother.

The woman is at liberty to marry again as soon as she pleases, after the lapse of twelve days. Though, in the instance mentioned, the divorced wife is permitted to marry again after the lapse of twelve days, the divorcing husband has, according to law, or usages which have equal authority, the power of divorcing his wife in such a manner as to prevent her ever marrying again. On these occasions she is often treated personally with extreme cruelty, and, during the formal process of being divorced, receives first *a black fowl*, expressive, it is supposed, of the wish of her husband that she may ever be to all others a repulsive object; second, a *walking-stick*, indicating that for the future she is to have no home, but is to be an outcast on the roads; third, a small *piece of money*, signifying that she is to be dependent on what is given by others; and fourth, a piece of *white gun-wadding*, to signify that she is to continue in that state till her hair is white with age.

A widow forfeits all claim to respectability of character, if she marry within twelve months of her husband's decease, and would, were she thus to act, be marked and shunned in society.

Though the females in Madagascar are not reduced to the humiliating state of degradation in which they are found among some uncivilized portions of the human race, the usages here noticed shew, that, as among all other communities unblessed by the elevating and softening influence of the gospel, she is far from being esteemed as the equal, the companion of man, excepting in his humiliation and disgrace. If the husband be guilty of any crime for which he is reduced to slavery, his wife, however innocent she may have been, is also deprived of her liberty. Woman is held in estimation chiefly as the creature of convenience to man, and often suffers as the victim of his caprice and ungoverned passion, or of his sordid and heartless avarice. The state of native society in Madagascar, in reference to the females, adds another to the already extended catalogue of facts which shew the obligations of the sex to the christian religion, and prove that it is only where the principles of divine revelation prevail, that woman is raised to the position in the social relations of life, for which she was intended and qualified by her Creator; while the happy results that have followed the partial diffusion of the principles of Christianity, the introduction of christian marriage, among the natives of this interesting country, as well as the choice and abundant fruits in social peace and hallowed affection, which they have brought forth among communities still less civilized,* shew that they have lost none of their power to refine, to elevate, and to enrich with the highest privileges the female portion of every community in which they prevail.

* The South Sea Islanders and some of the aborigines of South Africa.

CHAP. VII.

The rite of circumcision—Appointment of the time for its observance—Consecration of the vessel for the holy-water—Procession for bringing the holy water and other requisites for the ceremony—Bull-baiting and other amusements at the festival—Platting of baskets—Slaughter of a sheep—Measuring the children—Planting the banana stem—Benedictions pronounced on the children—Public addresses delivered to them—The faditra, or offering to bear away evil—The strong water—Slaughter of the red bullock—The father's address to the son while the rite is performing—Conduct of the mothers on the occasion—Feasting at the close of the ceremonies—The custom of forming brotherhoods by drinking of blood—Parties who thus enter into solemn covenant—Symbols used—Form of oath or engagement—The mouth of the heart—The drinking of each other's blood—Extent to which the engagement is binding—Existence of a similar custom in Borneo—Nature and operations of slavery—Hard lot of the slave-mother—Mode of redemption from slavery—Bondsmen of the government—Hospitality of Madagascar.

Before a youth is considered fit for the army, or capable of rendering any service to the government, and hence before any domestic establishment can be formed, he must undergo a ceremony practised by many nations of the earth, and variously estimated by different tribes—this ceremony is circumcision. No date can be assigned for its introduction among the Malagasy. It was either brought by the original settlers, or introduced by Arab or other traders of African descent, at a very early period. Tradition states, that Andriamanelo established the custom in the interior of the island, and that Andrianjaka added to its observances. Those chieftains, however lived in a period comparatively modern. Flacourt describes the ceremony as practised in the island when he wrote his history, nearly two hundred years ago, and as having then existed for a long time; and his testimony is confirmed by the accounts of the pirates and other earlier settlers on different parts of the coast.

Although the Malagasy regard this ceremony somewhat in the light of a religious rite, they assign no moral considerations for its observance. Scarcely, indeed, are physical reasons adverted to. They occasionally intimate that it is regarded as in some way essential to manhood. In general, however, if a Malagasy be asked why he observes it, he replies, "Our ancestors practised it, and we do the same;" and should he be still further importuned, "But why did your ancestors do it?" the trenchant reply is thrown back on the too inquisitive inquirer, "Who can tell that?"

The following account of the ceremonies, as generally observed, has been furnished by those who were eye witnesses of the proceedings described. On some occasions, and among different families and classes of the people, deviations from the particulars stated are observable, but they are too trivial to merit distinct notice.

The time of performing this ceremony does not at all depend on the age of the child; and nothing analogous to the Jewish observance of an eighth day exists. All depends on the will of the sovereign, as the ceremony is, in some respects, an initiation into the rank, privileges, and obligations of the members of the body politic, and, in a sense, transfers the subjects from the jurisdiction of the parent to that of the king. The sovereign, in consequence of an application from the parents or the friends of any number of children in a given province, appoints a time, and orders the observance of the rite.

When the announcement has been made, that a general observance of this rite shall take place, the parents and relations make their arrangements for the day: this is necessary, because the different branches of the same family assemble for convenience in one house on the occasion. As chanting and singing form a considerable part of the proceedings, these exercises are practised by the people, in their respective villages, for some days before the arrival of the time for the circumcision. The females employ considerable time in preparing ornaments and decorations for their persons, particularly in plaiting their hair in the finest manner possible. Slaying of oxen, and feasting in each other's houses, generally occupy the week immediately preceding the ceremony.

These preliminaries adjusted, the "binding the calabash or gourd," fehi-voatava, follows. A gourd or calabash, used for fetching or holding water, is selected, and carried in procession by a number of men to the sovereign, or his representative, on the occasion. The leader of the procession carries a spear and a shield. The calabash is intended to be used in fetching the water called holy or sacred, employed in the ceremony, and is carried in this formal manner to the king, who is also high-priest on this occasion, in order that it may be consecrated. Its consecration consists in the king's striking off, with his spear, the top of the gourd, and afterwards binding it in cross plaits with a particular kind of grass, and the slender branches of a native shrub. In performing this part of the ceremony, the king, holding a shield in his left hand and a spear in his right, imitates the action of a warrior, and exhorts the fathers of those children who are about to undergo the rite, to enforce on their attention the duty of loyalty and devotedness to their sovereign, that they may serve, honour, and do homage to him.

The *hasina*, usual fee or acknowledgment in money, according to the rank and ability of the party, is then presented to the sovereign, as presiding master of the ceremonies, by the father or guardians of the children; and the sovereign is in the habit of lending to his personal friends, or chieftains of high rank and station, on these occasions, silver chains of different size and value, which are used in a subsequent part of the proceedings.

The vessel having been, as they suppose, consecrated, and the customary offerings or dues paid, the calabash is carried in procession, amidst the shouting and dancing of the people; the pageant being rendered increasingly grand and imposing in their estimation, by the numerous ornaments, large hats, and bands across the shoulder, which are worn by those who now proceed to obtain what is designated sacred or holy water.

As the leader of the procession exhibits with his shield and his spear, as he moves along, the attitudes and actions of a warrior, he asks repeatedly, E! rano inona itoy? "What water is this?" To which others answer, E! rano masindrano manory! "This is the holy water that wearies."

On arriving at the spot in the fields from which the water is to be taken, a stem of the banana-tree is planted in the earth—a tent is erected near the spot—and under the shelter of the latter, the party remain for the night, as it would interfere with the required sanctity of the ceremony, for the holy water to be conveyed into any house excepting that in which the ceremony is to be performed. A fattened ram, purchased for the occasion, is killed and eaten with bananas, sugarcane, &c. during the time the party is waiting for the water deemed sacred, the obtaining of which is so important a part of the ceremony.

While one party is procuring the holy water, another party is preparing the house in which the chief part of the rite is to be performed. All the furniture, the mats, the cooking utensils, &c. are removed, and the inside of the house lined with new mats to the very roof. A distribution of bullocks, sheep, poultry, rice, fruit, and vegetables is also made to the strangers who may be visiting at the time; and thus the engagements of the day on which the party went for the water, close.

As soon as the morning dawns, those lodging in the fields proceed to the pool whence the water is to be taken; when they reach its margin, one of their number, (and it is necessary that it should be a man whose parents are both still living,) descends into the water with the gourd or calabash in his hand, and lowers himself in the water till the vessel is filled. Another standing opposite to him poising a spear, hurls it as if intending to kill him, but takes care merely to strike the earth near the place where he stands.

When the calabash is filled with water, the bearer leaves the pool, and the procession moves towards the village, decorated with all the finery and ornaments which those who compose it have been able to procure. The stems of the banana-tree, ripe bananas, sugarcanes, bamboos, small canes, and silver chains, with various articles used during the course of the ceremonies, are also borne in the procession.

From daylight the same morning, those in the village are usually busy in preparing to go forth to meet the procession. The chiefs and nobles array themselves in their silk and scarlet robes, and are decorated with beads, and silver and gold lace. Gold and silver chains are also worn in profusion, and trinkets of various descriptions "without tale." The females also appear in their rich and many-coloured dresses. Their natural hair is curiously plaited, and their heads are decorated with a varied profusion of ornaments. Besides beads, rings, chains, &c., they wear as a part of their head-dress a large quantity of the rofia, split into exceedingly small fibres, and dyed black, so as to resemble artificial hair; the neck, hands, and feet are also loaded with ornaments. Dollars, strung together by means of a strong line passed through a hole on opposite edges, are worn like bands or fillets on the heads of the females, and over the shoulders of the men. This latter ornament is used as an indication of the wealth of the wearers or their families. In the order observed in the procession, fathers take precedence—the mothers follow—friends, relations, and others bring up the rear. They proceed about half a mile from the village, where they meet those bringing the sacred water; the latter procession advancing slowly, dancing as they proceed, the leader with his spear and shield asking what the water is, in the manner already mentioned. The females then advance, dancing, and singing, "Bless the water, the consecrated water that wearies!"

On reaching the village, the whole procession moves three times round the house where the ceremony is to be performed, bearing the holy water and its accompaniments; after which they enter the house, and remain till the amusements commence. These consist of bull-baiting, dancing, singing, beating drums, &c., and are kept up by alternate parties with considerable energy and hilarity until about sunset, when the people again enter the house.

Odd as the combination may seem, and little as the rite to be performed may have to do with bull-baiting and platting baskets, the preparing of the last comes next in order.

Having entered the house, the females employ themselves in platting split-rushes, for the purpose of forming small baskets; they sing and chant during the time they are thus employed; and the baskets, when finished, are suspended in a line extending northward, the basket intended for the eldest child being placed first.

While the females are employed making the baskets, the master of the ceremony kills a sheep in front of his house. This is called fahazaza.* After cutting off the head of the animal, the body is given to the multitude, who scramble for it, and in a few minutes tear the whole to pieces. The use of a knife or any sharp instrument is forbidden, as contrary to the order of the ceremony. Every female obtaining a portion is supposed to obtain with it the blessing of fruitfulness. No sheep, however, possesses this potent efficacy, that is not of a certain kind and colour decided by the sikidy, or divination.

The children on whom the rite is to be performed are next led across the blood of the animal just killed, to which some idea of sacredness is attached. They are then placed on the west side of the house, and as they stand erect, a man, holding a light cane in his hand, measures the first child to the crown of the head, and at one stroke cuts off a piece of the cane measured to that height, having first carefully dipped the knife in the blood of the slaughtered sheep. This knife is again dipped in the blood, and the child measured to the waist, when the cane is cut to that height. He is afterwards measured to the knee, with similar observances. The same ceremony is performed on all the children successively. The meaning of this, if indeed any meaning can be attached to it, seems to be the symbolical removal of all evils to which the children might be exposed,—first, from the head to the waist—then from the waist to the knees—and, finally, from the knees to the sole of the foot.

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* Causing fruitfulness.

A hole is now dug in the north-east corner of the house, in which a stem of the banana-tree is planted, and on it an earthen lamp is fixed, to burn during the night. Great attention is paid to the fixing of the stem, that the height may be proper, and the lamp made fast. The stem of the banana is consecrated by water, sweetened with honey, being poured into the hole and upon the stem. Large silver chains are now placed in the rice-fan, and a portion of the sacred honey and water is poured on them, by which they are supposed to be consecrated or separated for the ceremony. The rice pounder is also introduced. A small quantity of the honey and water is then given to each of the children, and the person presenting it pronounces benedictions on them, the silver chains in the mean time being rattled in the rice-fan. The benedictions are of this kind, "May the children prosper in the world!—may they have spacious houses, well filled with silver and slaves!—may their cattle be too numerous for their folds, and may their property be great!—if stones are thrown at them, may they escape uninjured! and if stoning others, may they effect their purpose!—if attempted to be seized, may they elude the grasp! and if seizing others, may they fasten on them!—if pursued by others, may they not be caught! and if pursuing others, may they take them!—and may they be beloved by the king and the people!"

The benedictions are repeated several times; not, however, by direct words, but by the more expeditious mode of numbers, (like the easy mode of praying by counting beads,) merely saying, one, two—two, three—three, four—up to ten, and frequently repeating these associated units. During all this time, the people hum and repeat, prolong and repeat, the national sound "oo, oo, oo," in one continued note, as long as the breath can sustain it. This is a usual expression of pleasure, the significant sound of approbation, and conveys as much to a Malagasy as the heartiest thrice-repeated cheer does to an Englishman.

It is also repeatedly asked during this part of the ceremony, "Is it not well? Is it not admirably well? Is it not good? Is it not exceedingly good?" with many other detached and equally important exclamations and inquiries.

Having advanced thus far, some one, accustomed to speak in the public assemblies of the people, then addresses all who attend on the occasion, and charges them "to behave with proper decorum during the proceedings, to avoid levity of conduct, and to enter the house with their heads uncovered, lest by any neglect or impropriety they should desecrate what is holy, and so render unavailing the ceremony." The lamp is then lighted, the drums beat, and dancing and singing commence, which are continued during the whole night.

The next morning the fathers of the children who are to be circumcised, fetch the baskets platted on the preceding day, and in which bananas were placed as offerings to avert future evils. These offerings (called Faditra) are placed first on the children, and are then carried away by the fathers, who prostrate themselves, as they leave the house, to a spot at a short distance from the village, where they are cast away. No one dares to touch these bananas; they are deemed accursed, and are devoted to bearing away evil.

The ceremony of fetching the water called the Rano-mahery, "strong water," now takes place. Early in the morning the double calabash is brought out of the house, a hole is struck through the centre, and silver chains are put in. It is then carried to a running stream, and carefully filled by passing the vessel up the stream in a sloping direction, that the water may flow into it. In fetching it, the bearers must run with the utmost rapidity, having first girded up their loins. The leader of this party also carries a spear and a shield. The people collect at the entrance of the village, and await the return of the water-bearers, each one holding reeds and stones in his hand, with which, in a playful manner, they pretend to assault the water-bearers on their return. A song is repeated on this occasion, consisting of these few simple expressions; Zana-boro-mahery, Manatody ambato, "the young eagle lays her eggs on the rock;" implying, that in like manner the children will attain places now deemed inaccessible, and deposit their property beyond the reach of danger and spoliation. After walking round the house three times, as before, the party enters, bending forwards as they approach the door.

A young bullock of a red colour, selected for the occasion, being now brought into the court-yard of the house, the person who is to perform the rite advances, cuts a slit in the animal's ear, and dips his knife in the blood which flows therefrom. At the dropping of the blood from the ear of the animal, the children are supposed to be placed under a guarantee from all future harm. A small drum is then placed near the threshold of the door, and the child on whom the ceremony is now to be performed, being seated upon it, is firmly held by several men, and his ears stopped by the fingers of those around him. The father stands close to the door outside, with his spear in his right hand and shield in his left, performing with them the actions of a warrior; and while at this moment the rite is performed, the father exclaims, "Thou art become a man; mayst thou be loved, loved by the sovereign and by the people!—may the sovereign continue to reign long!—may there be mutual confidence between thee and the people, be of good report among the people, be facile of instruction, and of a docile disposition!" The father exhorts the child to take courage, declaring, that now he has become a man, he should have a gun, a spear, and a shield, and should follow the king; that, now he belonged to the king, he should henceforth serve him, and do homage to him, but that if he cried, he should not be the child of the king, but would be stigmatized as effeminate, and respected by no one.

The exhortations addressed to the children of the slaves at this season are of a different description. A man with a spade in his hands exhorts them to serve their masters well, to collect fuel, to attend to the culture of the ground, to take care of the cattle, &c.; adding, that if they did not serve their masters well, they would be sold, &c.

The rano-mahery, "strong water" is immediately employed in washing the children. While the rite is performing, the mothers are crawling about on the floor, touching the earth with their hands, and throwing dust and ashes on their hair, as tokens of humiliation on account of their children. Each mother rises from the ground at the moment her child has received the rite, and endeavours to assuage its grief, nursing it by the side of a fire made of the reeds which have been already mentioned.

The rite being now performed, there is usually a distribution made by the chiefs of the district, and by the heads of the families, of a number of oxen, to be killed and divided among the strangers and visitors. The parties then return to their several homes, when a fowl is killed, and some bananas given to the children.

Abstinence is enjoined on both the parents of each child that receives the rite, as well as on the nurse, and on those who prepare its food.

In the course of two or three weeks the whole ceremony terminates by feasting, and other rude signs of rejoicing, accompanied with dancing and singing. A peculiar kind of dancing is practised on the occasion, called *soratra*, which signifies "writing," and consists in the parties wearing respectively dresses of different colours, white, blue, red, &c. forming themselves into columns, each column having its own colour, and then dividing, and passing each other at right angles.

In the year 1825 the ceremony occupied the attention of the inhabitants of Ankova during the months of June, July, and August, and was attended with a vast expenditure of time and property. Subsequent poverty, thefts, and murders, to a most fearful extent, were the deplorable consequences.

Another popular engagement in use among the Malagasy is that of forming *Brotherhoods*, which, though not peculiar to them, is one of the most remarkable usages of the country.

The design of this custom might almost justify its being designated the freemasonry of Madagascar. From that institution, however, it differs in two essential respects: its rites and ceremonies are not secret, but public; and its object is to cement two individuals in the bonds of most sacred friendship, and not to constitute a mysterious and secret society. More than two may thus associate, if they please, but the practice is usually limited to that number, and rarely embraces more than three or four individuals. It is called fatidrá, i. e. "dead blood," either because the oath is taken over the blood of a fowl killed on the occasion, or because a small portion of blood is drawn from each individual, when thus pledging friendship, and drunk by those to whom friendship is pledged, with execrations of vengeance on each other in case of violating the sacred oath. To obtain the blood, a slight incision is made in the skin covering the centre of the bosom, significantly called ambavafo, "the mouth of the heart." Allusion is made to this in the formula of this tragi-comical ceremony.

When two or more persons have agreed on forming this bond of fraternity, a suitable place and hour are determined upon, and some gunpowder and a ball are brought, together with a small quantity of ginger, a spear, and two particular kinds of grass. A fowl also is procured; its head is nearly cut off; and it is left in this state, to continue bleeding during the ceremony. The parties then pronounce a long form of imprecation and mutual vow to this effect—"Should either of us prove disloyal to the sovereign, or unfaithful to each other, then perish the day, and perish the night.* Awful is that, solemn is that which we are now both about to perform! O the mouth of the heart!—this is to be cut, and we shall drink each other's blood. O this ball! O this powder! O this ginger! O this fowl weltering in its blood! it shall be killed, it shall be put to excruciating agonies,—it shall be killed by us, it shall be speared at this corner of the hearth, (Alakaforo or Adimizana, S.W.) And whoever would seek to kill or injure us, to injure our wives, or our children, to waste our money or our property; or if either of us should seek to do what would not be approved of by the king or by the people; should one of us deceive the other by making that which is unjust appear just; should one accuse the other falsely; should either of us with our wives and children be lost and reduced to slavery, (forbid that such should ever be our lot!)—then, that good may arise out of evil, we follow this custom of the people; and we do it for the purpose of assisting one another with our families, if lost in slavery, by whatever property either of us may possess, for our wives are as one to us, and each other's children as his own, and our riches as common property: O the mouth of the heart! O the ball! O the powder! O the ginger! O this miserable fowl weltering in its blood! thy liver do we eat, thy liver do we eat; and should either of us retract from the terms of this oath, let him instantly become a fool, let him instantly become blind, let this covenant prove a curse to him: let him not be a human being: let there be no heir to inherit after him, but let him be reduced, and float with the water never to see its source; let him never obtain; what is out of doors, may it never enter; and what is within, may it never go out; the little obtained, may he be deprived of it, and let him never obtain justice from the sovereign nor from the people! But if we keep and observe this covenant, let these things bear witness. O mouth of the heart! (repeating as before) may this cause us to live long and happy with our wives and our children; may we be approved by the sovereign, and beloved by the people; may we get money, may we obtain property, cattle, &c., may we marry wives, (vady kely,) may we have good robes, and wear a good piece of cloth on our bodies, since, amidst our toils and labour, these are the things we seek after.* And this we do that we may with all fidelity assist each other to the last.

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* An expression remarkably similar to that of the patriarch Job, "Perish the day in which I was born! and the night which shouted 'A man-child is brought forth!'" See Dr. Good's Translation, ch. iii. ver. 3.

The incision is then made, as already mentioned; a small quantity of blood extracted and drank by the covenanting parties respectively saying as they take it, "These are our last words, We will be like rice and water;[*] in town they do not separate, and in the fields they do not forsake one another: we will be as the right and left hand of the body; if one be injured, the other necessarily suffers and sympathizes with it."

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* A confession that confirms the declaration of the Divine Teacher, who, knowing what was in man, said, "After all these things do the gentiles seek."

The terms of the covenant are not regarded as binding literally; the respective possessions of the parties, such as cattle, slaves, money, &c., are not considered as common property; but the engagement involves a sort of moral obligation for one to assist the other in every extremity: and, however devoid of meaning some parts of the ceremony of forming brotherhood may appear, and whatever indications of barbarity of feeling may appear in others, it is less exceptionable than many that prevail among the people.

The design of the engagement—which is in fact a covenant to render mutual help in seasons of peril or need—is highly commendable; while the limited number embraced in the same fraternity, prevents its ever threatening, as combinations so permanently binding are sometimes supposed to do, the peace of society. So far as those who have resided in the country have observed its effects, they appear almost invariably to have been safe to the community, and beneficial to the individuals by whom the compact was formed.

The practice of a similar mode of entering into the most sacred engagement, by the inhabitants of the large but extremely remote island of Borneo, especially by the Dayaks, one of the chief aboriginal tribes of that country, adds greatly to the opinion generally entertained, that Madagascar was, at least in part, peopled from the same source as that from which most of the islands of the Malayan archipelago derived their inhabitants.

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[*] This is a natural, simple, and beautiful allusion, in common use among the Malagasy, to denote an inseparable association. The rice is planted in water—grows in water—is boiled in water—and water is the universal beverage taken with it when eaten.

This similarity, particularly in the ratification of the friendship by the parties drinking each other's blood, is strikingly exemplified in the subjoined account, furnished by the Rev. W. Medhurst, a Missionary of the London Missionary Society, who has resided many years in Java, in describing a late visit made by his assistant, and a Missionary from the Rhenish Missionary Society, to the Dayaks in Borneo.*

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* After speaking of the attention paid by the chiefs and people at a village called Gohong, Mr. Medhurst continues:—"They wished, therefore, to establish a fraternal agreement with the Missionaries, on condition that the latter should teach them the ways of God. The travellers replied, that if the Dayaks became the disciples of Christ, they would be constituted the brethren of Christians without any formal compact. The Dayaks, however, insisted that the travellers should enter into a compact, according to the custom of the country, by means of blood. The Missionaries were startled at this, thinking that the Dayaks meant to murder them, and committed themselves to their heavenly Father, praying that, whether living or dying, they might lie at the feet of their Saviour. It appears, however, that it is the custom of the Dayaks, when they enter into a covenant, to draw a little blood from the arms of the covenanting parties, and, having mixed it with water, each to drink, in this way, the blood of the other. Mr. Barenstein having consented to the ceremony, they all took off their coats, and two officers came forward with small knives, to take a little blood out of the arm of each of them; this being mixed together in four glasses of water, they drank severally each from the glass of the other, after which they joined hands and kissed: the people then came forward, and made obeisance to the Missionaries, as the friends of the Dayak kings, crying out with loud voices, 'Let us be friends and brethren for ever, and may God help the Dayaks to obtain the knowledge of God from the Missionaries! The two chiefs then said, 'Brethren, be not afraid to dwell with us, for we will do you no harm; and if others wish to hurt you, we will defend you with our life's blood, and die ourselves ere you be slain. God be witness, and this whole assembly be witness, that this is true.' Whereupon the whole company shouted, *Balaak!* or 'good,' 'be it so.' After the ceremony was over, the travellers bade them farewell, and, going on board their prow, returned to Benjarmasin, accompanied by the chiefs and people shouting and cheering as they went."

Among the Malagasy few classes derive more benefit from the covenant of brotherhood than the slaves, who very generally avail themselves of the advantages its provisions afford, and thus, in some degree, mitigate the severity of their lot. Its influence is also acknowledged by the highest ranks: the late Radama, when pursuing his career of conquest on the western shore, confirmed his treaty of friendship with a shrewd and powerful chieftain near Tamatave, by the covenant of brotherhood; in ratifying which, the high-contracting parties drank each other's blood.

From the notices already given of the social institutions and usages of the inhabitants of Madagascar, it has been shewn that it is a country in which slavery has accumulated its guilt, entailed its degradation, and inflicted its misery. Of the nature and extent of the slave-trade formerly carried on in this country, and the means which led to its abolition, an account will be given in a subsequent part of this work, but a brief notice of domestic slavery in the island may not be inappropriately introduced in connexion with the foregoing account of native society.

Slavery appears to have existed in Madagascar from a very early period of its history. Whether this greatest curse of human soiciety is of indigenous growth, or whether it was imported by any of the early emigrants from Africa or other countries, is uncertain; but from the date of the earliest correct accounts that have been given of the people, it appears to have been general throughout the island. Captives taken in war, and the wives and children of those vanquished in battle, were retained in slavery, and sold by their conquerors, being regarded as the most valuable part of the spoils of victory.

Free persons sometimes become slaves by their own act, viz., by selling themselves, when reduced to a state of absolute poverty, into slavery. A father may also sell his children into slavery in certain cases. Many are made slaves by the sentence of the judges, or the edict of the sovereign. Slavery is the heaviest penalty of the law next to capital punishment: it is always attended with confiscation of property, and involves the wives and children of the party on whom it is inflicted. In the hands of a weak and vindictive government, it is an instrument of fearful oppression and cruelty; and all its severity and bitterness have been repeatedly felt in this unhappy country in recent years, to an almost incredible degree. Sometimes the slavery is final, and the bondman rendered irredeemable; in other cases a price is fixed on the slave, on the payment of which he is restored to liberty.

The children of the slaves are the property of the owners of their parents; and from this source, as well as by purchase, the Malagasy families obtain a succession of home-born slaves: these are at any time liable to be sold to another master, and taken to a distant part of the country.

The treatment the unhappy slaves receive, differs with the dispositions and manners of their owners. In many cases that treatment is comparatively mild, the yoke of bondage is not felt to be heavily oppressive, the unjust and unnatural relation of proprietor and owner is absorbed in that of the head of a large household; and there have been rare instances, in which a slave has been so well treated as to prefer remaining in slavery to being set free. Such individuals, of course, continue with their proprietors, although no custom of "boring the ear," similar to the Jewish practice, is known to exist.

In some cases a poor freeman has been known to offer himself as a slave to a family of respectability and kindness of disposition, only requiring to be fed and clothed. Children follow the condition of the mother, to whatever owner the father may belong, or whatever may be his rank.

The principal employment of the slave is in the culture and preparation of rice, which is the staple food of the people. During the season for digging the soil, sowing, transplanting, and reaping, the slave is employed in the field: on him also devolves the thrashing and housing the grain; to pound, sift, wash, and clean the rice, is also their daily employment, and is, in fact, one of the chief occupations of the slave, together with fetching water from the springs. The latter is exclusively the business of females, excepting that for the sovereign, which is always carried by men.

When slaves in a family are numerous, some attend to cattle; others are employed in cultivating esculent roots; others collect fuel: and of the females, some are employed in spinning, weaving, and making nets, washing, and other domestic occupations.

Some of the nobles have two or three hundred slaves. In many cases, the masters, particularly where they are numerous, allot them pieces of ground for themselves. These they cultivate, and thus provide for their families food and clothing; of the latter, indeed, the slaves generally possess but a very scanty portion.

In the army, it is usual for slaves to accompany the owners, to carry their bedding, (i. e. mats,) with provisions, and to cook for them during the journey or campaign.

Confidential slaves are also employed by some owners in trade, and are of course entrusted with a small capital. Half the amount of profit obtained is allowed to the slave, as an encouragement to industry, and a reward for fidelity. Some families wholly support themselves by this means.

Among the slaves, marriage is honourable, as in other classes of society. Its bond is, however, loose, and exceedingly liable to disruption, being not unfrequently dissevered. It is regarded more as a matter of convenience than of any moral obligation. The parties frequently belong to different owners, and sometimes exchange owners, occasioning not merely a removal from one part of the town to another, (a circumstance of very little importance,) but from one town to another, or from one part of the country to a distant one. This local separation dissolves, as if by necessity, the tie which had united the husband and wife. Others separate because they no longer choose to live together; and as no form or ceremony beyond their own agreement cements their union, none is deemed necessary to their separation. They agree to separate, or the one party ceases to frequent the other, and by a tacit understanding the connexion is broken. There are, however, honourable exceptions. A mutual attachment is in some cases the basis of the conjugal union, the pledge of conjugal fidelity and of permanent connexion, and the parties remain man and wife till death, which dissolves all human ties, bursts this, the closest and best of all earthly bonds.

A freeman is not permitted by law to marry a slave, but a freeman may redeem the slave he wishes to marry; and when thus made free, she cannot be sold into slavery again. In the event of a divorce, the woman goes forth free.*

The lot of the slave-mother is not an enviable one. Her service is little, if at all, diminished by the circumstance of her having a family. The infants must crawl about on the ground, or are carried at her back while performing her daily routine of labour; yet such is the force of custom, that a child at the back, secured by the mother's lamba, or outer garment, and stretching its little legs around her sides, seems to occasion but slight inconvenience to the parent, whether carrying a load on her head, fetching water from the springs, or discharging other domestic duties.

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* This merciful provision corresponds with the Mosaic regulation on the subject, already noticed.

No term of service necessarily secures the liberty of the slave. A master may grant freedom if he pleases, but no law compels him to bestow it. Slaves are, however, at times redeemed by their relations, when the latter are in circumstances to advance the required sum.

Masters have full power over their slaves, excepting as to life. They may act towards them as they please, and punish them as they judge proper for any offence they are guilty of; the sovereign reserving to himself the right of inflicting the punishment of death. Trial by ordeal is administered to slaves by permission of the judges. Beating, flogging, and putting in chains are punishments in the hands of the proprietors. A slave's security from severe treatment consists chiefly in the national usages and the national spirit, both of which, in regard to the treatment of slaves, are mild rather than cruel.

Between these bondmen and the absolutely free, there exists what may be termed an intermediate class, who, though not exposed to all the bitterness of slavery, nor liable to be sold or given in exchange from one owner to another, yet taste few of the sweets of liberty. Among these may be reckoned those who labour for the government, especially those employed in felling timber or burning charcoal. In one of the great forests near the capital, the woodcutters, called "the twelve hundred," though these are supposed to be two thousand in number, are employed through life in felling, and preparing for building or other purposes, timber for the government.

They build their huts, and rear their families, in the recesses of the forest, cultivating suitable portions of the soil for their scanty subsistence. The male children of these people are regarded as woodcutters from their birth, and labour at their avocation through life without any wages or remuneration from the government; and were any of them to abandon their occupation, and leave the forest, they would be pursued by soldiers, treated as criminals or deserters if overtaken, and shot or otherwise put to death. This hardship is not confined to the woodcutters, but extended to all the natives regularly employed by the government. These amount to a considerable number, as there are, besides the fellers of timber and burners of charcoal, smiths or general workers in iron about four hundred in number, gunsmiths and spear-makers, carpenters, gunpowder manufacturers including those who prepare nitre and sulphur, tanners and curriers, soap-boilers, tailors, and sempstresses. The numbers engaged respectively in these several avocations vary, but all are required to labour at them during life for the sovereign, without any payment for their labour; they are, it is true, exempted from the taxes levied on the freemen, but they are obliged to provide for the support of themselves and families, which they generally effect by the cultivation of a small portion of rice-ground; but should the labours of their several avocations not allow time for this, the government makes no provision for their support, and this must be supplied, as is the case with those in the army, by their relations, or the families to which they may severally belong. No individual appointed by the sovereign to any of the above occupations could leave the same for any other, or remove to another part of the island, excepting by the consent of the government, without being subject to the penalty of death.

There is another class, inhabiting the eastern districts, the Bezanozano, who are required to carry all merchandise or other goods for the sovereign from the coast to the capital, a distance of three hundred miles—an unrequited service, which they dare not refuse, on pain of forfeiting their lives. The disastrous operation of such arbitrary exactions is too apparent to need any remark, and cannot fail greatly to retard the progress of improvement and civilization.

No traits of character or general feature in the domestic habits of the Malagasy, are more conspicuous and pleasing than their universal practice of hospitality.

Throughout the country, with the exception of perhaps one or two of the portions but little known and seldom visited, and where the inhabitants are suspicious or reserved, whenever a stranger in the course of his journey enters a village, and if he only proposes to remain and rest for a short season, a present is almost invariably brought him of rice, poultry, and fruit, or whatever other refreshment the village affords; and if disposed to delay his departure till the next day, he will experience no difficulty in attaining the best accommodations in the village. Whatever house he approaches, if the proprietors are within, he is politely invited to enter, and is cordially welcomed. A mat is spread, on which he is directed to sit or recline, and he is either assisted in preparing his own provisions, if he carry these with him, or solicited with respectful courtesy to partake of the best which the house may contain. This is followed by a succession of attentions and civilities, which cannot fail to convince him, that if he is not among the most polished and refined portions of human society, he is not among rude and unfriendly barbarians.

The hospitality of the people is in part to be ascribed to their customs in regard to their chiefs, who always require to be entertained with the best that can be provided, whenever they travel among the people. Of this custom the government has not been backward to avail itself; while it has encouraged, and to some extent enjoined, the observance of the rites of hospitality. In the latter part of his reign, the late king issued a proclamation, declaring that, while all the provision and other kinds of property belonged to the subject, all the houses in the country belonged to the sovereign; and calling on the inhabitants to furnish lodgings to his servants or soldiers whenever they might require them. In order to satisfy himself as to the degree of attention paid to his proclamation, he went shortly afterwards in disguise to a village at some distance from the capital, and towards evening entered one of the houses, and solicited shelter and accommodation for the night. This was not refused by the heads of the family, but rendered in a way that prevented the guest from concluding, by any possible mistake, that he was welcome. He soon left, and travelled to the next house that appeared likely to yield the shelter he required. Here he was cordially welcomed, and hospitably entertained with the best that the host could provide. On the following morning, when taking his leave, Radama, not less to the surprise than consternation of the whole of the family, made himself known, and left them with assurances that they should not be forgotten. He remembered his word; and soon after his return to the capital, sent his officers to the village, with a severe reprimand to the man under whose roof he had found himself an unwelcome guest, and a handsome present for the peasant family by whom he had been generously entertained.

CHAP. VIII.

Facility with which the means of subsistence are obtained in Madagascar—Different kinds of food—Flesh of the ox, sheep, and goat, monkeys, and hedgehogs—Poultry—Fish—Eggs of the crocodile—Locusts and grasshoppers—Silkworms in their chrysalis state—Vegetables and grain—Rice, maize, manioc, arrow-root, yams, sweet potatoes, &c.—Additions to the above by the introduction of European vegetables—Increasing use of the Irish potato—Fruits—Pineapples, grapes, oranges, peaches, citrons, lemons, &c.—Manufacture of bread—Methods of dressing their food—rice-boiling—Cooking of meat—Limitation of the number of meals in a day—Custom of washing the hands before meals—Manner of taking food—Beverage of the people—Distillation by foreigners—By natives—Uses of tobacco—Expedients used in preparing Malagasy snuff—General mode of taking snuff by the *mouth*—Intoxicating quality of the native hemp—Longevity of the natives—Number and nature of diseases—The Malagasy fever; its symptoms, progress, European and native remedies—State of the healing art among the natives—Supposed origin of diseases—Cures attempted only by divination—Native medicines—Use of the vapour bath—Of cold bathing—Superstitious observances—The Malagasy god of medicine.

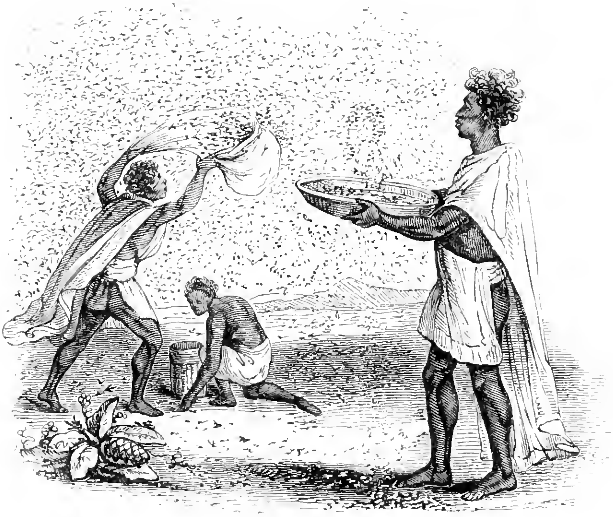
The soil of Madagascar, though fertile, yields spontaneously but few roots that are suitable for food. Vegetation is luxuriant and diversified; yet the shrubs and trees that grow without culture, include not the prolific bread-fruit of Polynesia, nor furnish the inhabitants with more than a very small portion of the means of subsistence. These, however, are obtained with comparative ease, in sufficient abundance to supply every want of the people; while the extent of the soil and resources of the country are fully adequate to sustain a population vastly greater than its present amount. The means of subsistence which the country affords, though they exhibit less variety than prevail in some countries of the same zone, are most valuable in kind, and highly conducive to vigour and health. The numerous herds of cattle, which constitute the chief wealth of the Malagasy, supply one of the most constant and serviceable kinds of food to all, excepting the very poorest classes in society. The animal food of the Malagasy comprises the flesh of fish, fowls, and beasts; the latter including those esteemed the best by all tribes of men. The productions of their soil comprise vegetables, roots, and fruits.

Among the several kinds of animal food, the flesh of the ox is most valuable and abundant. Beef is termed, by way of eminence, *hena*, meat: all other kinds of meat being distinguished by affixing the animal's name. The distinction probably arose from the flesh of the ox being the the first, and for a time the only, as it is now the chief, kind of animal food used by the people. The ox is the only animal that is slaughtered for sale in the markets; sheep, goats, and all others, are sold alive. Besides beef and mutton, veal and lamb are sometimes used.

No pigs are allowed to come to the capital; but pork is eaten in the Sakalava country, and other parts of the island inhabited by the dark-coloured tribes, who also eat the flesh of the wild boar. Goats are eaten by some, as are also monkeys and hedgehogs, of many kinds and degrees of delicacy.

The poultry of the Malagasy comprises turkeys, geese, and ducks, with tame and wild fowl. Fowls are abundant. They have also a species of wild fowl resembling the pheasant; guinea-fowl, tame and wild; various kinds of birds, especially one in shape like a partridge, but smaller. Tortoises, turtles; eggs of hens, ducks, and all birds, as well as those of the crocodile. In their estimate of eggs used as food, those that contain chickens are said to be considered the greatest delicacies. The eggs of the crocodile are taken in large numbers in some parts of the island: and the Missionaries have seen as many as five hundred eggs gathered for food by one family. Their lighter kinds of animal food, like that of the Africans on the adjacent continent, comprises locusts and several sorts of grasshoppers.

Large swarms of locusts are often seen in Madagascar in the spring and summer. They generally approach the central parts of the island from the southern and western quarter, and pass like a desolating scourge over the face of the country, leaving the trees and shrubs entirely leafless, and destroying the plantations of rice and manioc, and whatever the gardens contained. Their appearance on approaching is like a dense cloud of considerable extent, the lowest part of which is about two feet above the ground, while the upper part rises to a great elevation. The natives, on the approach of the locusts, fly to their gardens, and, by shouts and noises of the most tumultuous kind, endeavour to prevent their alighting. In the uncultivated parts of the country, they often dig holes, of large dimensions, and nearly a foot deep, in which great quantities are collected and taken; or they arrest them in their flight by means of wide shallow baskets, or by striking them down with their lambas, after which they are gathered up in baskets by the women and children. The locusts form at times an important article of food; for this purpose they are caught as above described, slightly cooked, and eaten, after the legs and wings have been picked off; or they are partially boiled in large iron or earthen vessels, dried in the sun, and repeatedly winnowed, in order to clear the bodies from the legs and wings; they are afterwards packed up in baskets, and carried to the market for sale, or



MODE OF GATHERING AND WINNOWING LOCUSTS USED FOR FOOD BY THE MALAGASY.

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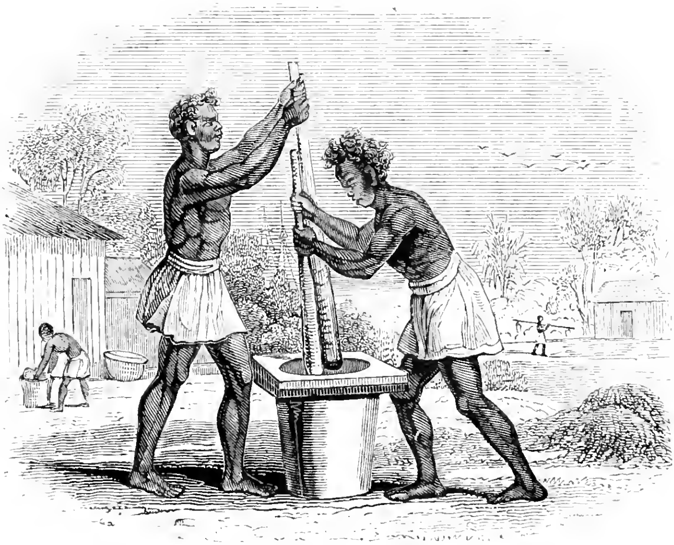

METHOD OF BEATING RICE FOR THE PURPOSE OF SEPARATING THE HUSK FROM THE GRAIN.

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kept in large sacks or baskets in the house for domestic use.

Locusts are usually cooked by frying them in an iron or earthen vessel. Shrimps are not unknown in the island, and the natives say that in taste the locusts resemble them.

An equally singular, but scarcely less frequent article of food among the Malagasy, is the silkworm in its chrysalis state. Considerable quantities of these are gathered, and exposed in large baskets or sacks for sale in the markets of the Betsileo country, and in some of the districts of Imerina, more particularly Imamo, where the *tapia edulis*, the plant on which the silkworm of Madagascar feeds, grows spontaneously in great luxuriance and abundance. Silkworms are cooked and eaten by the natives of Betsileo and Imerina as grasshoppers and fish are prepared and taken by the inhabitants of other provinces.

The fish eaten by the natives are not numerous. A species resembling trout in form and size, with a considerable variety of smaller fish, especially a kind of the size and appearance of sprats, taken in the canals or branches of the rice grounds, and in the inland ponds, are much used. Eels, some of them remarkably large, crawfish, and oysters are also used in different parts of the country.

The vegetable productions are numerous and valuable. First among these may be properly reckoned the nutritious and wholesome *vary*, or native rice. It is the most important and general article of support to the whole population, and may be justly regarded, as in many Eastern countries, the staff of life. The natives consider rice alone as *mahavoky*, "able to appease hunger, or satisfy the appetite." Every thing else, even the round of buffalo beef, is regarded only as an accompaniment to the rice. In ancient times, in some countries, the invitation to a feast was to eat bread; and to take refreshment, of whatever it may consist, is, in the language of the country, to take bread: so, in Madagascar, to eat rice signifies to take a meal; whatever is taken besides, is called *laoka*, (the *inei* of the Polynesians,) something eaten with rice, their chief or staple food.

Next to rice, the most valuable kinds of food are, the maize, or Indian corn, the manioc root, arrow-root, and several varieties of yam. To these may be added sweet potatoes, French beans, and most of the European esculent vegetables; besides many valuable roots that grow in the plains, woods, or valleys, without culture. The Irish potato has also been introduced, and is becoming a favourite article of food. Onions are exotic. Leeks, pumpkins, melons, with many agreeable and wholesome vegetables resembling greens or cabbage, and others that have thick and pulpy leaves, are eaten by the people. Capsicum, or Chili ginger, in a moist state, and saffron, are used as spices or condiments, together with salt, obtained by a process already described, or brought from the coast, where it is formed by evaporation.

The fruits eaten by the people include pineapples, oranges, lemons of various kinds, citrons, peaches, wild figs of several kinds; bananas and plantains, muscat grapes, Cape mulberries, several kinds of berries which grow without culture. A fruit resembling an unripe orange in appearance, the outer part of which consists of a shell of a pale yellow or straw colour, the inside being of a pulpy substance, inclosing a number of small seeds, and bearing a great resemblance to the guava; also sugarcane and sugar.

A kind of bread called ampempa is used by the inhabitants of some of the districts, particularly Imamo. It is a sort of unleavened bread made of Indian corn, which the natives call katsaka. To the above may be added honey, found in the forests; milk, which is not much used by the natives. Very recently, butter and cheese have been made for use in the Mission families.

The Malagasy methods of dressing their food are few; and they have not many compounds or made dishes. The most important part of their cookery consists in preparing their rice, which is generally boiled in a large round earthen or iron pot, with a very broad base; which is placed on the stones, fixed in the hearth, in the centre of the house.

The rice, which is kept in the husk in a sort of granary, is made ready for use in such quantities only as the daily consumption of the family may require. The rice is prepared with great care, and involves considerable labour: when first brought from the granary, it is put into a large stone or wooden mortar, about eighteen inches or two feet deep, and twelve or eighteen inches wide. Here it is carefully beaten in a peculiar manner, with a large wooden pestle, about five feet in length, so as to break and remove the outer husk without breaking the grain. The rice is then taken out, and separated from the husk by winnowing; it is then beaten in the mortar a second time, for the purpose of taking off the inner skin, which is also removed without breaking the grain, after this it is again submitted to the winnowing-fan, and the pieces of earth or small stones carefully picked out. The rice is then a third time submitted to the operation of the pestle, to remove any remaining portion of the inner covering of the grain; this being done, it is tossed in the winnowing-fan, washed in fresh clean water two or three times, and finally put into the earthen or iron vessel, and covered with water when fuel is supplied until it boils. The water is allowed to boil slowly until the rice, which is never disturbed, gradually swells, absorbs the water, and encrusts on the inside of the vessel—the rice in the middle becoming dry, though, towards the outside, the grains adhere. It is then pronounced *masaka*, "done, ripe."

Meat is either boiled, roasted, fried, or stewed; though in a manner somewhat different from that practised in Europe and other countries, where the animal is skinned before being cut up into joints or steaks, and cooked. The flesh of most animals is cooked with the skin and hair on; which (excepting at festivals) is invariably the case with their beef:* the skin is so peculiarly palatable, that square pieces of it, with a portion of fat adhering to them, are frequently boiled till they form one gelid or glutinous mass, when they constitute a dish in high repute with the Malagasy epicures. The thickest parts of the skin are the greatest delicacies.

Their meat is boiled or stewed in an earthen or iron vessel, or fried in one of the same kind; and when roasted or baked, is suspended or fixed in the blaze of the fire, or placed among burning embers of the hearth.

The *jaky*, meat, eaten at the great annual feast, is cut into long strips or slices, dried in the smoke of their houses, and torn to pieces, till in appearance it resembles burnt shreds of cloth or leather. Before being served up for food, it is fried or stewed with fat.

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* This is an exceedingly primitive mode, if we are to receive the testimony of a Chinese writer, who states, that "in high antiquity human beings inhabited the dens and caves of the wilderness; and, free from jealousy or opposition, cultivated the friendship of animals. But when men began to exercise wisdom, beasts became their enemies, whose claws, tusks, horns, and venomous properties, rendered them exceedingly formidable. Habitations were built of wood for protection, and the human species began to study the art of self-preservation. From ignorance of agriculture, and want of skill to procure fire, they subsisted on grass, wild fruits, and raw flesh, which they ate with the hair on."

Locusts are stewed, or fried in the same manner; their wings being first removed by shaking them together in order to detach the legs and wings from their bodies, and then winnowing in the manner already described.

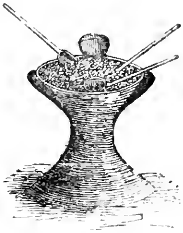
Vegetables are usually boiled. Yams are boiled or roasted. Manioc root is boiled, roasted, or dried in the sun till it resembles pipe-clay. Eggs are boiled hard. Maize is roasted or boiled, excepting when made into a sort of bread. Arrow-root is boiled. Whatever pepper or salt, &c. is used, is thrown in during the cooking process, and not taken with the food afterwards.

The manner of taking meals among the Malagasy is remarkably simple and primitive. When the rice is cooked, and the laoka, whatever it may be, (which is always dressed in a separate vessel,) is ready, the family, guided by the position of the sun in the heavens, generally wend their way to the house.

All classes, excepting the aged, the sick, and infants, or young children, take only two meals in the day; the first about noon, and the second after sunset, usually from seven to eight o'clock in the evening.

When the household, including slaves, meet at their meals, the master and rest of the family seat themselves, in a kind of squatting position, on mats spread for the purpose, on the west and north sides of the fireplace, leaning their backs against the sides of the house; the slaves form themselves in a line on the ground, on the east and south sides of the dwelling. The hands of all are washed before they begin their meal. This is done by a slave going round with water in a zinga, or horn, which he pours on the hands of each individual, who thus prepares to take his repast.

When all are ready, earthenware plates, or rather basons, fixed on a broad pedestal about a foot in height, are then filled by the slaves with rice, and on the top of the rice the laoka is placed. If meat, it is always previously cut into pieces or portions, according to the number to be provided for. Whatever the laoka may be, whether meat, fowl, or fish, soup, honey, or vegetables, it is always placed on the rice. If the plate contain a portion for only one individual, a spoon is put into the rice, and it is placed by a slave before the person for whom it is designed. Sometimes the portions for two or three individuals are deposited in one basin, when an equal number of spoons made of horn are fixed in the rice.

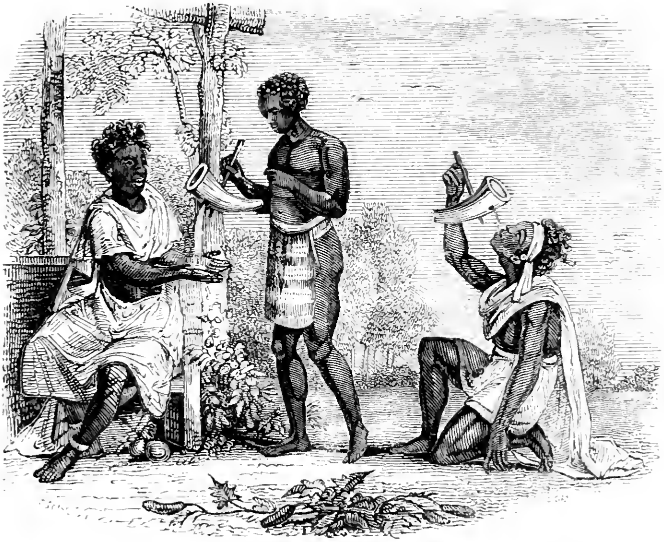


No forks are used at the Malagasy meals; the hands serve as excellent substitutes, in the estimation of the people in general. There is generally but one knife, which is used by the slave who divides the portions of meat, or other laoka, for the several members of the family.

A separate vessel of rice is in general cooked at the same fire for the slaves; but when the number of the latter is small, sufficient rice is boiled for them as well as for their masters in one vessel, and they take their meal either at the same time or immediately after the family.

As soon as the rice-dishes are emptied, a beverage resembling coffee is made by pouring water into the pan in which the rice had been boiled, and to the inside of which the burnt rice had adhered. This is boiled for a short time, when a portion of it, poured into a rice-basin, is given to each individual, by whom it is drunk without sugar or milk, being esteemed a wholesome pleasant drink.

The natives wash their hands after each meal in the manner already described; and the teeth are cleansed with water poured into the mouth from a horn, which is not allowed to touch the lips.



The people are not accustomed to sit long over their meals. The dinner is usually despatched in half an hour, when all immediately return to their several avocations.

The meal at the close of the day is not terminated with equal despatch, as they seldom leave the house afterwards, excepting in the long evenings of summer.

It has been already stated, that the Malagasy are not addicted to excessive drinking; the exceptions chiefly occur on the coast. The general, and indeed almost universal, beverage of the natives, is water. They can scarcely be said to have the habit of drinking any thing with their meals, as is customary among Europeans. A part of their meal is usually of a fluid rather than a solid nature, and this eaten with their rice seems to render it less necessary for them to drink at the time of eating.

A distilled spirit, known under the general name of "toaka," is occasionally used throughout the island, but only as a luxury, not as a common beverage.

To the parts of the coast visited by Europeans, rum and arrack have been principally imported, and sold to the natives by the bottle or cask. These drugs are also taken in exchange for rice, and have involved many families in want and ruin. A very large distillery of ardent spirits was established a few years ago on the eastern coast. It is carried on by the agents of a mercantile house having extensive connexions at the Isle of Bourbon, and its operation threatens serious mischief to the people.

The use of ardent spirits is prohibited at the capital; the law, however, is frequently evaded. Considerable quantities are used there, though for the most part within the precincts of the palace-yard, whence the laws emanate, and whence also indulgences are obtained, since, in a state of society resembling that prevailing in Madagascar, legislators do not always feel bound by their own laws.

How long the art of distillation has been known in the island, cannot be ascertained. But in various parts of Madagascar, an inferior, and to a European palate disagreeable spirit is prepared, from the sugarcane, or from honey, or from the berries of the *Buddleia Madagascarensis*, and some other native productions. A juice is also produced by the rofia-tree, which is much relished by the natives, and is obtained in a manner similar to that in which toddy is obtained in India. The natives make a hole in the tree extending to the centre, tie a bottle to it, and leave it a short time to fill by the oozing out of the liquid, which is perfectly clear and mild.

The native still, by which spirit is obtained from sugar-cane, is rude and simple. After the cane has been crushed by rolling a trunk of a tree, or heavy log, over another log of wood laid upon the ground, and in which a groove is formed to carry off the juice into some pan or tub, and fermentation has been allowed, the liquor is boiled in any large vessel the natives possess; while boiling, the steam is carried through a piece of bamboo, or a gun-barrel if they possess one, to the outside of which cold water is applied, for the purpose of condensing the steam; and the spirit drops into some reservoir, not unfrequently the open mouth of a native, whose impatience forbids his waiting till the reservoir is filled. In preparing the toaka, they usually put into the liquid, while the fermenting process is going on, a small quantity of soot, for the purpose of imparting to the drink an agreeable bitter flavour. A family seldom possess more than a few bottles of this spirit, which is generally drank on occasion of some social entertainment, as a friend's visit, a return home from a distance, a marriage, or a purification by the ordeal.

French wines are also known, where the natives have had commerce with Europeans, and the word "divay" is introduced into the language as the native mode of pronouncing the French "du vin." The wines are not generally esteemed. Something "mafana," warm to the stomach, or of a more powerful and stimulating kind, is preferred. Malt liquors have also been introduced, but are not used to any extent by the people.

Milk is also drunk by many, but cannot be called a general beverage. The people prefer allowing to the calves the benefit of the supply which nature affords, and hence butter and cheese were unknown, till made on the spot by Europeans, and, though highly esteemed by many of the natives, have not yet been brought into general use.

Tobacco is cultivated to a considerable extent by the Malagasy, but it is not smoked, or used alone, as in other countries. With its medicinal properties the natives are acquainted, and in their medical preparations it is frequently employed, but it is chiefly used in the manufacture of snuff. In the preparation of this article, which is taken as a luxury and a stimulant, the leaves of tobacco are dried and pulverized; to this powder is added the ashes of the leaves of a sweet-scented herb, in the proportions of two-thirds powdered tobacco, and one third ashes; a small quantity of potash or salt is thrown in, and the whole well mixed is considered fit for use. The Malagasy, it may be remarked, take great quantities of snuff, but have their own mode of doing it. Europeans prefer taking it at the nose The Malagasy, perhaps less wisely, prefer the mouth. The former deposit the grateful narcotic in the nostrils, the latter pour as much as the space will conveniently hold between the teeth in the lower jaw, and the inner surface of the under lip; thence to suck it leisurely, they think renders the pleasure more lasting than a mere hasty, evanescent sniff could afford. Which custom is really most conformable to nature, or best answers the purpose for which tobacco was originally designed, is a point which it is not essential at present to decide.

The use of the *rongona*, or native hemp, a powerful stimulant, usually smoked, was formerly very general; it was frequently taken before going to battle, on the same principle that an extra allowance of ardent spirits is served out to men in the army or navy of our own country before going to action, but its use has lately been prohibited by the government under the severest penalties. There is, however, every reason to believe that it is still used secretly as a means of intoxication, especially in the districts and villages at a distance from the capital.

The habits of life among the Malagasy being in many respects exceedingly simple, exempt them from much disease, and favour the duration of life. And though the healing art is comparatively unknown, the period of human existence is not, on the average, shorter than among those nations in which the study and practice of medicine and surgery are pursued on the most enlightened and scientific principles. Though their towns and villages, their markets and places of public resort, shew a great disproportion in the number of men compared with the women, and fewer children than an equal adult population would generally exhibit in other parts of the world, it has been observed by those who have resided long in the country, that there are, in most sections of the island, an unusual number of very aged persons. Many appear, from the number of times at which the festival of Fandroana has occurred exactly at the same time, (an event which takes place only once in three and thirty years,) and from their recital of events within their recollection, to have numbered on earth nearly one hundred years; while there are others who are supposed to have attained a still greater age, and who, free from any particular disease, seem to be gradually sinking under the accumulated weight of years. As an indication of the protracted period to which the human constitution retains its tone and vigour, it is remarked, that baldness is rarely seen but in extreme age, and that it is late in life before the hair becomes gray. Excepting therefore the swampy coast, and those parts of the island in which, from stagnant waters or other causes, the baneful miasma produces the fever and ague so fatal to numbers of the inhabitants, the climate may be regarded as conducive to health, vigour, and longevity.

But though the Malagasy are thus favourably situated, they are not exempt from a large measure of disease and suffering, the universal fruits of sin; while the inveteracy of the one, and the severity of the other, are greatly increased by the vices to which they are addicted. Though their diseases are not numerous, one of the Missionaries had, during his residence among them, not fewer than between fifty and sixty different kinds of disease brought under his notice. Very few of their maladies are acute, they are chiefly chronic; and though many of the afflicted pass a considerable portion of their lives under various degrees of suffering, but few are carried off suddenly. Many of the diseases are common to other countries, while some are peculiar to islands—among the latter, the most alarming and destructive is the Madagascar fever.

The Malagasy fever, or rather fever and ague together, is called *tazo*. This is the most prevalent and destructive malady in the whole island, especially to the Hovas and Europeans. Ankova, Fort Dauphin, and some of the northern provinces, are the only parts of Madagascar which are throughout the whole year exempt from its formidable ravages. Other parts are exempt at certain seasons; and in some provinces it is so destructive, that certain districts are said to resemble, during the months of December, January, and February, the fabled valley of the deadly Upas, where the whole atmosphere was loaded with poison. To these districts in Madagascar, condemned criminals are sent, and seldom survive for any length of time, their arrival in these regions of death. Mr. Hastie describes a district of this kind, over which he travelled in 1822, as being hilly, nearly destitute of wood, and having but few parts covered with stagnant water; yet he states that it was customary to send persons who had been supposed to merit death to be confined near the place; and adds, that the prisoners have always, as was intended, died in the place. The part to which Mr. Hastie refers, is about two days' journey from the capital, in a N.N.E. direction.

It is stated as a singular fact, that the fever, (which few Europeans, or inhabitants of other parts of Madagascar itself, escape, and to so many of whom among both classes it proves fatal,) rarely seizes those who are natives of, and constant residents in, the parts of the island in which it prevails. Some of the Missionaries are of opinion that it preys exclusively upon strangers and foreigners. This renders it necessary for foreigners to avoid arriving on the coast during any of the months in which the fever prevails. The months of the year in which it is best for Europeans to arrive at Madagascar, are July, August, and September. Generally speaking, they are during this period less likely to be attacked with fever than in any other part of the year. This is a circumstance of great importance to Europeans proceeding to Madagascar.

The symptoms of the tazo, or Madagascar fever, vary considerably in different individuals. In some cases its early symptoms resemble those of a violent inflammatory disorder. This is always considered its worst appearance. In others it assumes the form of a remittent, and afterwards an intermittent fever, attended with chills and shiverings. This is regarded as its most favourable appearance, and that which encourages the greatest hopes of recovery. When the former symptoms are strongly marked, there is always great danger; but when the latter only are present, recovery is generally expected.

The symptoms of the fever, in its inflammatory state, are a severe head-ache, languor, pain in the eyes, especially on being turned upwards, dry and hot skin, vomitings, pain in the right side, great thirst, quick and hard pulse, a very foul furred tongue, aversion to food, flushing of the face, restlessness especially at night, loss of sleep, sometimes dread or fear, anxiety, hypochondriasis, delirium, an apparent improvement, and then death suddenly and unexpectedly.

In its most unfavourable appearance, the symptoms are cold and chills in the back, shoulders, and loins, stretching, lassitude, and a disposition to lie down, with great fatigue on the least exertion, a feeling of debility, anxiety, loss of appetite, thirst, uneasiness of mind, rigours, and sometimes stupor. This form is first remittent, and soon changes into an intermittent fever, which is divided into three stages of cold, hot, and sweating fits in a severe degree. The sensation during the shivering fit is like being pierced with darts. This is followed, if it continues long, with hypochondriasis, dyspepsia, hepatitis, and dysentery; and unless the fever ceases with these symptoms, it speedily afterwards terminates in death.

In regard to treatment, if the patient be robust, and has a hard quick pulse, Europeans have recourse to bleeding, and other means of reducing the system. When there is much thirst and a hot dry skin, an anodyne antimonial draught is sometimes found useful. If after this no change for the better be observed, mercury is administered, so as to produce ptyalism as speedily as possible, which in general diminishes or removes every unfavourable symptom. Tonics, such as cinchona bark or the sulphat of quinine, are afterwards administered, and the patient recommended to drink plentifully of rice-water, or some acidulated beverage.

In the native mode of treatment, the remedies are few and simple. When a person is seized with the fever, the remedy is directed by the sikidy, or divination. Inquiry in such cases is made of the sikidy, in which house the patient must dwell. Then they make his couch, that he may lie on the west of the hearth, near the fire, and administer plenty of rice to eat; yea, they compel him to swallow boiled rice, or any food, as they believe this to be essential to his recovery.

The most beneficial remedy in the early stage of the disorder is supposed to be rice-water, which produces perspiration, and is supposed to nourish the system during the season of aversion to food. When the skin is dry and hot, or a fit of fever comes on, the vapour-bath is used; leaves, supposed to possess medicinal qualities, being first boiled in the water. This diminishes the force of the fever, and sometimes checks it entirely, if it be used half an hour before the regular time of the appearance of the paroxysms which come on every other day. When the effect of the bath is thus salutary, the patient will then have an interval of ninety-six hours in which to recruit his strength, instead of only forty-eight. He will thereby be proportionably better fortified against the next attack. Besides rice-water, an infusion of herbs possessing aperient qualities are administered; to these they sometimes add a decoction of leaves, which is exceedingly bitter, supposed to act as a tonic.

In addition to the use of the vapour-bath half an hour before the paroxysm comes on, they take the warm bath every evening, which, with a quantity of warm drink, never fails to produce moisture on the skin, and gives the patient rest in the night.

Capt. Le Sage, who visited the island on a special mission from the government of Mauritius in 1816, and proceeded to the capital, lost most of his men by the ravages of the fever, from which his own life at one time seemed in danger, relates, in speaking of the treatment he received from the natives, when so ill as to be unable to speak or move:—"In this state, Hector (a native servant) made me swallow some water in which different herbs had been boiled; it was very bitter, and made me vomit, which I had before done in the morning. The Ovahs took me from my bed, then, covering me well with blankets, placed a pot of boiling water with different herbs under the blankets, and thus kept me in the steam until I was nearly suffocated. It having brought on slight perspiration, they replaced me in the bed, and some time after I found myself somewhat better; three hours after, it was repeated, and I found myself greatly relieved. In three hours more they laid me on my back, and poured over me the same, rubbing me well with the boiled herbs. I passed the night without sleep, but the fever left me in the morning; the fumigation was repeated, and, after having kept myself well covered for two or three hours, I felt so well as to be able to get up and eat breakfast."

It is, from general observance and experience, considered that hope, and cheerfulness, with a proper regimen, are among the best remedies; and that fear, grief, and fretfulness, have a tendency to bring on the fever, to increase the violence of all its symptoms, and to protract its duration, if it do not promote its fatal termination. A Frenchman at Tamatave was, in consequence of fright, suddenly seized with the fever; he gave himself up to despondency, and died in five days.

When the symptoms assume an inflammatory character, efforts are made to induce a remittent form; if these are successful, hopes of recovery are cherished. But if the inflammatory symptoms increase instead of diminishing, little hope of recovery is entertained, and nature sinks rapidly; delirium, deafness, insensibility ensue, and death terminates the scene.

Among the diseases to which the Malagasy are exposed in common with the natives of the adjacent continent of Africa, and other parts of the world, the small-pox, which they call *nendra*, is the most formidable. How long this fearful scourge, whose ravages are so fatal among uncivilized communities, has existed in Madagascar, is not known, but it was found there by the early missionaries, was reported to have been known long before that period, and has recently prevailed to an alarming extent; many of the natives, of every period of life, and of all ranks, from the highest in authority, to the lowest slave, bearing in their persons the unquestionable marks of the virulence with which it sometimes prevails. Apoplexy, epilepsy, and paralytic diseases but seldom occur, nor are pulmonary disorders frequent. Inflammatory affections of the bowels prevail at certain seasons, while, as might be expected from the free use of unripe fruits and vegetables, and unsuitable meat, few of the natives are exempt from stomach disorders, produced generally by the crude and unwholesome nature, and the large quantities, of their food. Dropsical complaints frequently occur, and many are afflicted with a hard and painful internal swelling in the diaphragm. Leprosy, which they call *boka*, prevails, though the unhappy victims of this hopeless disease are not numerous.*

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* A restriction respecting lepers prevails in Madagascar, resembling that enjoined by the Mosaic code. They are not allowed to mix with other portions of the community, or to live in the towns or villages of the people, but in separate houses erected expressly for them at some distance from all others.

Tumours of various kinds prevail, and a disease resembling what is termed the white swelling, is also occasionally seen, as well as more frequent instances of the elephantiasis, *lehibe tongotra.* Instances of deafness or dumbness rarely occur, though numbers suffer from diseases of the eyes, and not a few are totally blind. This calamity is supposed in many instances to occur from the winding of silk. The toothache is not uncommon, while ulcers, *boiboik*, and many of the scrofulous and cutaneous diseases, are general, and frequently exhaust the patience and baffle the skill of native and European doctors. The general neglect of cleanliness perpetuates many diseases of this class. Common catarrh and cough often prevail to a great extent; and though the hooping-cough is not known, a disease resembling the measles, designated *kitrotro*, produces great ravages when it makes its appearance among children. Few instances of insanity have been known in the island, though several cases of idiotism have been met with. Syphilitic affections are almost universal, and many are afflicted with them from their birth to the end of their lives; while few of the inhabitants, either infant or adult, appear exempt from the sufferings produced by worms.

Scarcely any cripples are to be seen in the island, and there is reason to fear that infants exhibiting any deformity or obvious defect at birth are secretly destroyed.

It has been already stated, that the Malagasy are almost entirely unacquainted with the practice of medicine or surgery; and as far as enlightened or scientific views of the one or the other are concerned, the healing art may be said to be unknown.

There are, nevertheless, a number of simple remedies, to which they are accustomed to resort in seasons of sickness or casualty, frequently with the most favourable results. Many of their applications, there is reason to believe, would be much more efficacious, were they not so frequently accompanied with useless and often injurious superstitious observances.

All diseases are supposed to be inflicted by an evil spirit, either in consequence of evil destiny, the incantations of some enemy, or the neglect of some required rite or ceremony. Hence, when disease appears, the friends of the sufferer repair to the nearest *mpanao ody*, who, by the sikidy, or divination, professes to affirm the cause and nature of the malady, and specify the means that are to be used for its removal. These sometimes consist simply in change of air, by the removal of the patient from one dwelling or village to another, or to some particular spot distinctly specified: at other times by a faditra, or prescribed offering, for the purpose of taking away the evil, which it is imagined or pretended has occasioned the disease. Whatever injunctions the sikidy may enforce in this respect, are most scrupulously attended to, as they would deem recovery almost impossible if the prescribed faditra were neglected.

Frequently, in connexion with the faditra, the patient, in recent times, has been instructed to apply to the Missionaries for foreign medicines, with the efficacy of which, and superiority over their own, the natives near the capital have lately become very generally acquainted. The ordinary practice, however, is to direct the application of some native remedy. The native practitioners in Madagascar seem to be utterly ignorant of the nature of the circulation of the blood; and in the formation of their opinions, and the prescribing of their remedies, no regard whatever is paid to the state of the patient as indicated by the pulse.

The pharmacopœia of the Malagasy, though simple and limited as it regards the substances embraced, admits of considerable variety in their mode of administration. No mineral preparations, excepting such as have been brought by foreigners, are ever employed, unless in this class certain kinds of red and white native earth, occasionally used, be included. Gunpowder is sometimes used. Animal substances are employed, but the Malagasy remedies are chiefly vegetable, consisting of roots, stalks, leaves, flowers, and seeds of different plants, or the bark of different shrubs and trees, aromatic gums, of which their forests furnish many varieties, and several kinds of moss and grass, tobacco, and capsicum. With the medicinal qualities of many of the indigenous productions of the country, the natives, especially the mpana ody, (Malagasy physicians and diviners.) seem to be correctly acquainted. Barks, gums, leaves, roots, &c., possessing an aperient, cathartic, diuretic, tonic, or sedative property, are generally applied in cases in which they are specifically required. Hence they are able sometimes to arrest the progress of the fever, when the symptoms of inflammation are violent and decisive. The remedies taken internally consist of decoctions or infusions. External applications are in the form of fomentations, poultices, or ointments made by heating the fat of animals.

As a general practice, the natives bathe less frequently than those of many warm climates where water is equally abundant as in Madagascar, but the vapour-bath is a favourite remedy with the sick, and frequently in the early stages of the fever it is most successfully applied.

The manner of procuring the vapour-bath is singular, and differs from that ordinarily pursued in this country or in Russia, where the steam-bath is in more general use than perhaps in any other nation of Europe, and where the room for baths is filled with steam by pouring water on a heated stone; it differs scarcely less from the rude and simple mode adopted by the South Sea Islanders, who fix the patient in a sort of open-bottomed chair, and place him in that position over a pile of stones heated red-hot, but covered with herbs and grass saturated with water. The Malagasy seat the patient over a large earthen or other pan containing water, spreading over him several large native cloths, and then produce the quantity of steam required by casting pieces of iron, or stones heated red-hot, into the water.

Cold-bathing is occasionally resorted to as a means of cleanliness, or for the sake of its refreshing effect in a state of exhaustion and fatigue, but not with a view to its improving or preserving the general health. The natives do not appear to have recourse to friction in cases of local disease, but resort to a practice resembling shampooing, as this is employed in the East, and among the South-Sea Islands, viz. pressing the muscles of the limbs with the hand, and pulling the joints during the incipient stages of disease, or at times of debility from fatigue.

Native medicines, in great numbers and variety, are to be bought in the markets. The mpanao ody, "makers of charms," are the preparers and venders of medicines. The nostrums are brought either ready for use, or so mixed up with herbs, barks, and gums as to prevent the uninitiated from discovering of what they really consist. This arises from the anxiety of the respective venders to preserve to themselves the exclusive advantage arising from the extensive use of medicine that may by accident become popular, and be regarded as a specific in any particular disease. Hence also, though each nostrum is designated by a particular name, and the disease for which, if the venders are to be believed, it is an infallible remedy, are distinctly stated, with an enumeration of its virtues almost equal to the puffing of quack-medicines in more civilized countries, its composition is kept a profound secret as long as possible.

Besides the remedies applied when disease is actually present, the Malagasy have what they consider as preservative medicines, which are taken with a view of fortifying the system against any pestilential atmosphere through which they may be called to travel, and are always taken as a precautionary measure when they are going to any of the districts in which the fever prevails.

The chief and only sources whence relief or preservation is expected, are from the infallibility of their sikidy, or divination, and the efficacy of the faditra, or offering, to remove the evil, or cause of suffering, as they suppose every malady to be a judicial infliction by the god or gods whom they have offended, or the effects of the spells and incantations of sorcery employed by some malevolent enemy to procure their destruction. Surrendering themselves, under this impression, to the guidance of their diviners, they dispense with the application of any medicinal remedy, and confidently expect a pain in the head or the face, or any affection of that part of the body, to be removed by simply wearing an amulet of stone or wood on the forehead, or a charm on the breast suspended from a string of beads around the neck.

Their preservation from pain and disease, though they use the medicine prescribed, they also ascribe to their imaginary gods. Ramahavaly, the great national idol of the Hovas, is their Esculapius, and, among other appellations, is addressed as "The Doctor," or curer of diseases. When the army is about to pass through a country in which either the small-pox, or fever, or other disease, has prevailed, the idol is carried through the ranks, attended by the idol-keepers or priests, who offer him their prayers, and sprinkle holy-water on the troops, as a means of security against the infections to which they might be exposed. Whenever any pestilential disease breaks out in the villages near the capital, or makes its appearance among the inhabitants of the latter, the people repair to the place of public resort; and when assembled, the idol is carried in a procession similar to that which attended it through the ranks of the army, and the people are all sprinkled with holy-water in the name of Ramahavaly, and afterwards return to their respective habitations, assuring themselves of security from disease, until some neglect of enjoined observances, some offence against the evil spirit, or offering to the sorcerers, should expose them to relentless vengeance and destruction.

CHAP. IX.

Practice of surgery among the natives—Method of treating wounds and fractures—Tooth-drawing—Native mode of cupping—Bleeding—Anecdote of Radama—Feast on occasion of his recovery—Treatment of the sick in general—Influence of divination in the selection of means of recovery—The faditra, or offering to remove pollution—The sorona, or supplicatory offering—Usages in reference to death—Mourning—Addresses to the deceased—Watching the corpse—Presents of money to the chief mourner—Method of disposing of the body—Manner of interment—Customs at funerals in the southern part of the island described by Drury—Property deposited in the tombs—Imagined pollution from touching a corpse—Badges of mourning—Period of its duration—The manao afana, or slaughter of bullocks, to avert evil from the deceased—Criminals not allowed the rite of burial—Places of sepulture—Size and nature of their tombs—Costly and gorgeous ceremonies of mourning on occasion of the death of Radama; description of his coffin of silver, mausoleum, &c.; money buried with him; number of cattle slain—Cenotaphs—Singular custom of bringing home to the family the bones of those slain in war—Monumental pillars.

In the judicious and successful practice of surgery, the Malagasy have scarcely advanced further than in the dispensing of medicine. Their operations are certainly less rude and perilous than those of the South Sea islanders, but are scarcely performed on better principles. Many have perished, whose lives, operations the most simple and easy to a scientific practitioner, there is reason to believe, might have preserved—such operations as those required to reduce a dislocation, or to give relief in dropsical complaints; but notwithstanding these deficiencies, a simple kind of what may be termed native surgery, has long been in use among them.

Inoculation in case of small-pox, with a view to abate the virulence of the disease, was introduced by some of the early foreign residents in the island, but under circumstances so disadvantageous as to excite strong prejudices against its continuance, or the introduction of the more effectual antidote to its fearful ravages, vaccination, which was subsequently attempted.

We may gather some idea of their heartless cruelty, and of the dreadful apprehensions with which the Malagasy regarded the approach of this terrific scourge, from the fact that it was their practice formerly, when the small-pox made its appearance in the capital, or in any of the towns or villages in the provinces, to drive the unhappy man first afflicted therewith, to a distance from their dwellings, and either stone him to death, or bury him alive in a grave previously dug for the purpose, with a view to prevent the spread of the contagion. In the reign of Radama, this barbarous practice was discontinued, and in its place, as a measure of safety, all who were affected with this frightful malady were removed to a distance from the villages, where they were lodged in temporary habitations, and furnished with food until perfectly recovered, when they were permitted to return to their former dwellings. The Missionaries have great reason to believe, that during the periods in which the small-pox has prevailed, no other cause, excepting those wars in which the adult population was exterminated, has destroyed so many lives; and extensive tracts of the country, now almost without inhabitants, are said to have been depopulated by its fearful ravages.

Wounds from a spear or bullet, even where the latter may be lodged in the body, they attempt to heal by washing the wound sometimes with a decoction of herbs, but chiefly by closing the apertures, and bandaging the parts, without attempting to extract the substance that may be lodged within.

In setting fractures of the limbs, particularly of the arms, they were generally more successful than in other operations. When the skull or the thigh was broken, which was occasionally the case in battle, the wounded were left to perish, without any attempt to preserve life; but in other cases the bones were drawn carefully together as near as possible in their original form; splints of bamboo were applied to the limb for the purpose of confining it in the proper position, and the whole carefully bandaged with native cloth. This method of treatment was often successful.

Dislocations of the joints were occasionally reduced; and it is stated by the natives, that amputations have been successfully performed by the mpanao ody; no instances of the kind, however, have come under the notice of the Missionaries. Tooth-ache is of frequent occurrence, for which all the native remedies were generally ineffectual; but after an instrument had been made by Mr. Chick, the *smith* connected with the Mission, many were relieved by the removal of the diseased tooth.

In general, the natives manifest great aversion to bleeding, although not unacquainted with the beneficial effects by which it has been followed; and occasionally they have recourse to a rude sort of cupping process, which they effect by placing the wide aperture of the end of a horn on the part affected, and then drawing out the air with the mouth through a small perforation at the point of the horn; and, having by this simple means raised the skin, they remove the horn, and puncture the skin in two or three places with the point of a knife, repeating the operation until a sufficient quantity of blood has been discharged. Whether this practice is one of their own inventions, or merely an imitation of cupping which they have seen practised by Europeans, is not known; it is a last resort, and whatever benefits it may be supposed to confer, its application to any whose lives are considered of importance, excites the most painful alarm. In illustration of this, the following occurrence, which took place shortly after the arrival of the first Missionaries, may be adduced.

In the year 1820, when Mr. Jones was residing at the capital, Radama fell from his horse, and, though not seriously injured, great confusion prevailed among the attendants on the king's person, and the inmates of the palace. The domestics ran for the Missionary, but were all too much alarmed to state what they wanted, or do more than inform him that the king was injured, and perhaps dying. Mr. Jones followed them, and entered the palace, where the king was lying on the floor, his face and neck being covered with blood. Fearing the worst consequence from the loss of royal blood, especially if the supply was not kept up, a number of live fowls were brought, and some of the attendants were busily employed in cutting off the heads of the fowls, and pouring the blood from their decapitated trunks into the king's mouth; others were making loud lamentations, embracing and kissing his feet; and others were fanning him, and wailing over him as already dead. Mr. Jones recommended their not adding any more blood from the fowls, and proposed, instead, to take some from the king. Violently opposing this, the attendants exclaimed, "What! take away more blood, when the king has lost so much already? no—let the sikidy be consulted." The king, though feeble, heard what was going on; and such was his confidence in the Missionary, that he said, in a low tone, "Bleed me; let the sikidy not be consulted: bleed me immediately." This, the attendants refused to allow, and still continued cutting off the heads of the fowls, and pouring their blood into the king's mouth. Aided by Messrs. Robin and Brady, foreigners residing at the capital, the king was placed in a chair facing the door, and Mr. Jones prepared to bleed him; but when about to open the vein, a principal officer, standing by, seized his arm, and prevented it. Mr. Jones, however, kept his hand so firmly fixed, that the moment his right arm was released, he accomplished his purpose. When the blood appeared, a cry was raised to stop it—this was refused—the king fainted—and the cry was repeated with gestures indicating frantic distraction. Radama, however, soon revived, appeared better, and was put to rest. The sikidy was then consulted, to ascertain who might enter the house, and approach his majesty. The diviners declared that the sikidy directed that none should enter but Mr. Jones, two other foreigners, and about twelve attendants, including the king's mother and three of his wives. The king continued to recover; and when the benefits resulting from bleeding were thus apparent, the people poured their benedictions on the Missionary as heartily as they had before opposed him; and, in order that the advantage might not be enjoyed solely by the king, they strongly solicited Mr. Jones to bleed *them*, in anticipation of a fall, or other accident which might render it necessary.

In a few days the king appeared to have completely recovered from the effects of his fall, and gave, in the course of the ensuing month, a public entertainment on occasion of his restoration.

A large tent was erected in the palace-yard, beneath which tables and seats were fixed. The feast was amply supplied with provisions, wines, &c.; and the whole was brilliantly illuminated with lamps.

The guests were admitted by tickets, and entered at a signal given by the firing of cannon. For the king and part of his family, a table was arranged in the centre; for his wives, a table to the north; and for the Europeans, one to the south; the female guests were placed east and west; the king's maroserāna, (an order of nobles who have the privilege of access to the sovereign at all times,) to the north; and the judges of the capital were seated to the south. Dinner was brought in by the military, every one putting down his dish "by word of command." All were in high glee; and Radama, enjoying the most buoyant spirits, kept up the scene of mirth and festivity till cock-crowing announced to the guests the propriety of bending their way homewards.

But, to return to their treatment of diseases. In cases of serious illness, the utmost attention is paid to the patient by the members and relations of his family, some of whom always remain to nurse and attend on him. In this respect their conduct presents a pleasing and striking contrast to that of the South Sea islanders, and other uncivilized communities. No one is carried down with cruel apathy to a river's brink, and left to perish there. The sikidy is repeatedly consulted, though this is attended with with some expense; and its directions are promptly obeyed. "Change of air," seems an important recommendation with the sikidy, as patients are frequently removed, by its instructions, from one house to another, and from one village to another.

No trait in the character of the Malagasy is more creditable to their humanity, and more gratifying to our benevolent feelings, than the kind, patient, and affectionate manner in which they attend upon the sick. Every thing within the compass of their means, that can administer to their comfort, mitigate their sufferings, or favour recovery, is provided. Wives frequently watch on the same couch on which their husbands are suffering under the fever, until the dreadful malady seizes them, when, on account of their great exhaustion and fatigue, they frequently become its victims.

The superstitions of the Malagasy unfold no bright futurity beyond the grave, but leave all in gloom and uncertainty. Hence the relatives, out of kind regard for the sufferer, carefully abstain from the mention of death, until its speedy approach seems inevitable.

Sometimes, besides the application of medicine, change of place, &c., the sikidy directs that a *faditra* be made; that is, an offering for the removal of the evil which is supposed to have occasioned the disease.

The faditra is frequently in itself of a very trifling nature, perhaps a little grass, or an herb, the name of which must be carefully specified; perhaps a small quantity of earth, taken from the ground at a spot measured by a given number of feet from the patient's door; or it may be merely the water with which he rinses his mouth! These being simply thrown away, according to the direction of the sikidy, are supposed to bear away with them, in some inexplicable manner, the causes of the malady in question, or else to counteract the spell by which, from sorcery or some unknown cause, the malady has arisen.

In addition to the faditra, the sikidy generally directs some offering to be made of a supplicatory nature. This is called the sōrona, and consists of a few beads, or ornaments, or herbs, and, in some cases, the singing of a child. In these offerings, prayer is presented, addressed to God,* to the Vazimba, and to the manes, or spirits, of their ancestors. And when the symptoms assume a decidedly unfavourable aspect, and the post of observation is darkening every hour, and hopes of life are surrendered, arrangements are usually made for the disposal of property: the heir is appointed, and the dying man, if a parent, commends his children to surviving relatives, frequently under evident anxiety, from the gloom and uncertainty surrounding the unknown future, upon which his reluctant and often agitated spirit is about to enter. Unlike the Christian, to whom death is the portal to immortality, the faint and feeble Malagasy meets death as an unwelcome doom, which he can neither avert nor delay.

After it is ascertained that death has taken place, the relations and friends maintain the absolute control over their feelings, as the law requires, till evening,† when they give unrestricted vent to their grief in weeping, accompanied by the most frantic wailing and lamentations. Whether from custom or sympathy, or both, so many of the friends of the deceased attend on those occasions, that not only is the house filled, but many others sit around it outside, expressing their sadness by tears and the most melancholy cries. All wear their hair dishevelled. The relatives also throw ashes upon their heads, and, though they do not literally clothe themselves in sackcloth, wear only their most coarse and worthless garments, making their grief in appearance at least the most piteous and affecting.

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* An account of the ideas attached to this term and service by the Malagasy, will be given in a subsequent part of the work.

† Should a person die at noon, or even in the morning, no one is allowed to mourn till after sunset.

Some of the natives actually tear their hair from their heads, and violently smite upon their breasts. They are also accustomed to address themselves in an impassioned manner to the deceased in terms resembling the following: "O! fetch me, my relative, my beloved relation, let me accompany you in your path; come for me, for now am I wretched indeed, and I have no one here to be what you were to me!"

As soon as the first paroxysms of grief have subsided, a number of the friends present confer respecting the interment, the quantity of cloth in which the corpse is to be folded, and the number of cattle to be killed. If the deceased have left property of his own, it is taken for the purchase of the cloth, &c. required; if not, they borrow, and immediately send a person to the market to obtain the articles.

In general, the quantity of cloth used, and of bullocks killed, and the number of muskets fired, all depend upon the amount of property the deceased has died worth. The house in which the corpse lies is now lined with cloth, and clean matting is spread on the floor. No kind of work is performed in it till after the interment, and the termination of the family mourning.

An ox is usually killed in the evening after the death has taken place, and certain portions of it allotted to the slaughterer of the animal, to the slave who cuts it up, to the owner of the axe used on the occasion, to the owner of the cord by which the animal had been tied, and then to the assembled relatives of the deceased.

An adjoining house is appropriated to the use of the guests during the night, and meat and rice provided for them. A portion is also prepared for those who are appointed to watch the corpse during the night, and for those on whom the duty of mourning will devolve in the morning.

For those appointed to watch the corpse, the meat is minced, cooked in a large vessel, and then brought into the house.

The mourners assemble in the morning, and the females, having wept over the deceased, retire to the adjoining house, called "Tranolahy," to partake of the provisions. The men collect a little money to present to the chief mourner, called the fahankanina, i. e., "causing food." In presenting it, they offer some apology of this kind:—"Do not attach any blame to us on account of the mere trifle which we offer in wiping away the tears of the family." The person accepting the donation, replies, "No! there is no blame, no censure whatever; and may the like calamity not befall you!" This finished, the men retire to partake of the provisions, and then send to the grave, to prepare it finally for the interment.

In the greatest number of instances, the body is in the mean time wrapped in the cloth used as the grave-clothes, or shroud, which is always a red lamba, or cloth. The corpse is then placed on a bier, and carried to the grave. As it is taken out of the house, it is lifted over a bullock recently killed for that purpose, and over another, (supposing in both cases the party can afford the expense,) before it is immediately lowered into the grave. The females sing a funeral dirge as the corpse is carried to the grave; and at the time of the interment, on reaching the place of sepulture, the corpse is placed in the grave without any further observances or delay. It is then covered with earth, so that it resembles a newly-made grave within the tomb, and a quantity of fresh charcoal placed on the corpse to resist the too rapid process of decomposition. The bier itself is left by the side of the grave, and a new one prepared on every new occasion. It is considered ceremonially polluted; no one would venture to make use of it even for fire-wood.

Drury, who was wrecked near St. Augustine's Bay, and was sixteen years in the south-western part of the island, from which he returned to England in 1717, gives the following account of the general observances at burials in that part of the country:—

"When any one is dead, all the relations and neighbours come to the house; the women make doleful lamentations, and the men assist in the necessary preparations for the funeral. In the first place, they pitch upon a tree for a coffin: after that, a cow or an ox is killed, and some of the blood sprinkled upon it, imploring at the same time their forefathers, and the demons and demi-gods, to aid and assist them, and take care that the tree does not split in the falling, or that any one be not hurt either by cutting or felling it. When the tree is down, they cut it about a foot longer than the corpse, and split it directly lengthwise, (for they always make choice of a tree which they know will split after this manner,) and dig both parts hollow like two troughs. It is then carried to the house, the corpse being in the mean time washed, and wrapped up in a lamba, or frequently in two, and sewed together. There is frankincense, or a gum much like it, burning all the time in the house. They seldom keep the corpse above one day, especially in hot weather. They put the corpse in the troughs, closing them together, and carry it upon six men's shoulders. Every family has a burying-place of their own, which no one dares infringe or break into; nor does any one indeed attempt it: this is enclosed and fenced round with sticks like palisadoes. When they come near the place, the corpse is set down, and then they proceed to the rest of the ceremony; this is—to make four fires, one at each corner, on the outside of the burying-place. On these fires they burn the cow, or ox, which was killed before for that purpose: then they divide it into quarters, which are all consumed in the flames. After this, they sprinkle frankincense upon the coals, and spread them all about. This being done, the chief or eldest of the family goes close to the entrance of the burying-place, and halloos aloud several times; after a short pause, he calls upon all the dead there deposited, commencing at the earliest and proceeding to the last, and each one distinctly by his name; and in the conclusion tells them, that there is a grandchild or near relation come to lie amongst them, and that he hopes they will receive him as a friend. Then the gate is opened, and two or three persons are sent in to dig the grave, which is made, for the generality, seven or eight feet deep, and the corpse is placed in it, and covered over with the earth, without any further ceremony. None are permitted to enter here, but some of the nearest relations, and the bearers; and the door is immediately shut fast again. There is commonly a crowd of people without, who are busy in carving up and dividing among themselves the oxen that have been killed for distribution, if it be a great and rich family that can afford it; but the poorer sort cannot gratify their friends in so bountiful a manner. They generally visit this burying-place once a year, to clear it from weeds, and make it clean; but never enter it till they have first burnt a cow or bullock before it."

It is customary at the interment of any of the royal family, or of the nobles, to deposit large quantities of property in the tomb with the corpse, especially of such articles as the deceased was known to be attached to during life. Affection prompts to this, as a means of administering comfort or affording gratification to the departed. On returning home, the chief mourner, who is the nearest relative of the deceased, immediately washes himself; some particular kinds of grass are also brought, and dipped in water, in which the several members of the family wash themselves. The garments which have been worn on the occasion must also undergo purification, which is effected by dipping their corners in water.

During the season of mourning, which in some of its requirements continues twelve months, the bereaved family absent themselves from dances and other public amusements; but the only badges of mourning, excepting the use of inferior clothing, already referred to, consists in putting off all ornaments, and neither anointing nor braiding the hair, but allowing it to remain loose and dishevelled, in which state it is never seen but on the members of the family in which a death has recently occurred.

The Malagasy seem to imagine that some degree of humiliation and self-denial is becoming during the season appropriated to mourning for departed relatives, which, it appears, varies in continuance according to the rank of the deceased, or the relationship of survivors; hence, while, for some, mourning is continued twelve months, for a son or daughter six months is the usual time. Not only is the hair dishevelled, all oils or perfumes neglected, the looking-glasses in their houses turned towards the wall, but they avoid sitting on a chair, as that is by many deemed an unsuitable indulgence during this season of grief.

The national mourning for the sovereign extends through twelve months, unless the period be shortened by a special order of the government, as was the case after the death of Radama. During the season of national mourning, all labour excepting the culture of the soil is suspended, all amusements are prohibited, and all means of indulgence in ease or gratification are laid aside; no one is allowed to ride in the sedan kind of chairs, or to sit in a chair; the nation is required to assume the aspect and adopt the habits of mourning and sadness.

A ceremony called the Manao afana, takes place in general a short time after the funeral. The ceremony consists principally in killing a number of oxen, distributing the meat among the relatives and visitors, and eating it under an indefinite idea, that in some way this service is the means of averting evil from the deceased, or preserving him from the effects of any malevolent feelings which may have been entertained against him during his life. A small contribution of money is again presented to the chief mourner, accompanied with an apologetic address similar to those used at the time of interment. This money is called the Fialana, i. e. token of departing or leaving; either implying the family's taking a final leave, a last adieu of the deceased, or the relations by this ceremony closing the funeral obsequies, and bidding adieu to the chief mourner as the representative of the family. On the occasion now under consideration, the chief mourner offers portions of the meat in return to those who have presented the Fialana. If the contribution of money has been large, the distribution of meat is large also; if small, the return is the same; and it is generally evident that some who attend on these occasions express their pretended sorrow for the gratification of sharing in the provisions distributed, and not from sympathy with the survivors in their affliction.

Meat given away on account of the dead is called, hena ratsy, i. e. meat unholy; and not any portion of it may be given to the dogs. What is not eaten must be buried.

Should any persons be carrying it on the high road, they must retire out of the way while a member of the royal family passes them, or the bearers of any thing belonging to the court, or of any article intended for the use of the royal family.

At the ceremony of Manao afana, it is usual for a senior relative of the family to address to the children of the deceased, an admonitory and impressive speech. This is delivered with considerable formality and apparent gravity. The children are formally arranged, the eldest being placed to the north,* and the youngest towards the south, a senior relative commences, and continues his exhortation generally in something like the following terms. "I am about to address you, arranging a few words to deliver a kabary (message) to you; let blame be taken from me, let me not be censured—I am rising first to speak, and am not able to sustain censure, for blame is like the rain above us, which, though we see it not, may fall, and injure us, 'tis as a smooth road where we may slide without perceiving it, 'tis as a stone in a path, against which we may stumble without being aware; wherefore do not blame me in saying, "Let not the father be disgraced by his descendants; let there not be a failure in due service; let not the young ox be always lean and small; let not the young rice-plants be stunted in their growth; let not the performance of what is just and right be neglected." The speaker then expresses some customary salutations to the king and royal family, and afterwards proceeds. "Here are the relations come from the north and south, from the east and west. What you have done is highly proper and gratifying. Ye have made no delay. Ye have borrowed what was deficient, and ye have shewn no partiality, but in your respect for the dead, ye bury the poor equally as the rich."

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* In the interior of the island, particularly in Ankova, a feeling of veneration is associated with the north side of the houses, as the part sacred to their ancestors. Should the spirits of the departed visit their former abodes, the northern part of the house is the place in which they would be heard.

The son replies to the address. "Take ye confidence—my father has left me; and whatever he did towards you, I shall persevere in adhering to it in the steadiest manner, and preferring to do more rather than withdraw. Here are the heads left—here the mother—here the sisters—take confidence, for ye have me."

The speeches having terminated, the eldest son, now the representative of the family, the bearer of its honours and its responsibilities, presents the largest bullock he can obtain as a donation to the company, and to the relations who may not yet have received a gift at his hand. Each one takes his share, and all retire to their respective homes.

It is evident from various circumstances, that the Malagasy, like the Jews, and some other nations, attach ideas of ceremonial uncleanness or pollution to a corpse. No corpse is permitted to be carried to the grave along the high road or principal thoroughfare in the capital, which is thought to be in some measure sacred. Nevertheless, the same road is frequently saturated with the blood of bullocks killed there for the adjacent market, or with the blood of human victims destroyed in obedience to their false and cruel divinations.

No one who has attended a funeral is permitted to enter into the court-yard of the palace till eight days have elapsed, and then he must bathe before he can be admitted. In all cases, a total or partial ablution of the garments of the mourners must take place on returning from a grave.

No one except the sovereign is permitted to continue, if ill, within the precincts of the palace, in case death should ensue. No member of the royal family may approach any corpse, excepting it be the corpse of a member of the family, or one recognized as a most intimate friend. Radama waived these national observances in his own attentions to the late James Hastie, Esq., during his illness, and forming part of his funeral procession; but this was a mark of that monarch's particular esteem for the British agent, and was equally honourable to the king and his deceased friend.

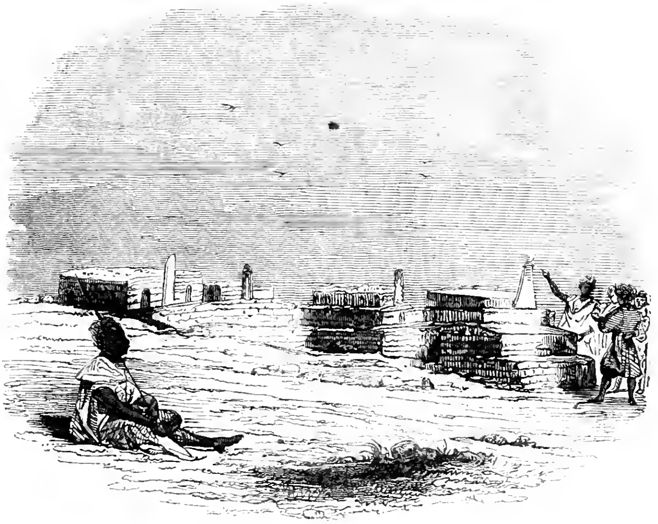
The rites of burial—simple and soothing as the expectation of them may be to the benighted mind of the dying Malagasy, who, from his superstitious belief, cherishes a hope that, if duly performed, his ghost will not associate with wild cats and owls, creatures of ill omen, and with evil spirits, but enter on a state of repose or enjoyment—are not always rendered. And consolatory as the performance of them may be to survivors, and high as may be the respect which their due observance secures for the children and relatives, who expect the same honours to be paid to their own remains—cases in which the sanguinary and heartless usages of the country do not allow them, are frequent. Criminals sentenced to death by the sovereign, and those pronounced guilty of witchcraft by the ordeal, after being barbarously put to death, are thrown down a steep rock, or left on the plain on which they have been killed, a prey for the hungry dogs which prowl about the capital or village, and mingle among the crowd who throng the path along which the miserable culprit is led to execution. These animals are frequently seen contending with savage ferocity, strengthened by hunger, for their prey, before the spectators have retired, or the shades of night cover as with a veil the revolting scenes which their voraciousness presents. It is seldom, if ever, that more than part of the bones of the unhappy wretches who have been denied the protection of a grave, remain on the ground on the following morning.

Another unhappy and pitiable class are the lepers; though they are buried, yet no rites or ceremonies are allowed on the occasion. The grave is dug, not among the tombs of their ancestors, but in some unenclosed place, and the body, carefully bound up, is literally rolled or thrown in any manner that can be done without touching it. Sometimes, after being in the earth for twelve months, or a longer period, during which it is supposed it has been undergoing a purifying process, it is dug up, when the bones are cleaned, wrapped in cloth, and deposited, with prescribed ceremonies, among the sepulchres of the family.

In the case of the bodies of those to whom the greatest respect was paid, and whose tombs are regarded as the most sacred places, the Malagasy do not appear to have had recourse to embalming the whole body, or even preserving the heads of the deceased, as is practised in some parts of the East, or in New Zealand and the South Sea islands. They are nevertheless able to preserve the bodies of the members of the royal family for a considerable time after death, chiefly by the plentiful use of gum-benzoin, or other powerful aromatic gums, of which abundance is found in the forests of the island.

Few of the general indications of the peculiar customs of the Malagasy are more remarkable than their places of sepulture. Most of their graves are family tombs or vaults. In their construction, much time and labour, and sometimes considerable property, are expended. The latter is regulated by the wealth of the proprietor. In erecting a tomb, the first consideration is the selection of an eligible spot. Publicity and elevation are their two principal requisites. Sometimes a tomb is placed immediately in front of the house of the person by whom it is built, or it occupies a conspicuous place by the road-side. At other times, tombs are built on an elevation in the midst of the capital, or village, or where two or more roads meet, and very frequently they are built on the outskirts of the towns and villages.

The site having been chosen, a large excavation is made in the earth, and the sides and roof of the vault are formed of immense slabs of stone. Incredible labour is often employed in bringing these slabs from a distance to the spot where the grave is to be constructed. When they are fixed in their appointed positions, each side or wall of a vault or tomb, six or seven feet high, and ten or twelve feet square, is often formed of a single stone of the above dimensions. A sort of subterranean room is thus built; which, in some parts of the country, is lined with rough pieces of timber. The stones are covered with earth to the height of from fifteen to eighteen inches. This mound of earth is surrounded by a curb of stone-work, and a second and third parapet of earth is formed within the lower curb or coping, generally from twelve to eighteen inches in height, each diminishing in extent as they rise one above another, forming a flat pyramidal mound of earth, composed of successive terraces with stone-facing and border, and resembling, in appearance, the former heathen temples of the South Sea islanders, or the pyramidal structures of the aborigines of South America: the summit of the grave is ornamented with large pieces of rose or white quartz. The stone-work exhibits, in many instances, very good workmanship, and reflects great credit on the skill of the native masons. Some of these rude structures are stated to be twenty feet in width, and fifty feet long.



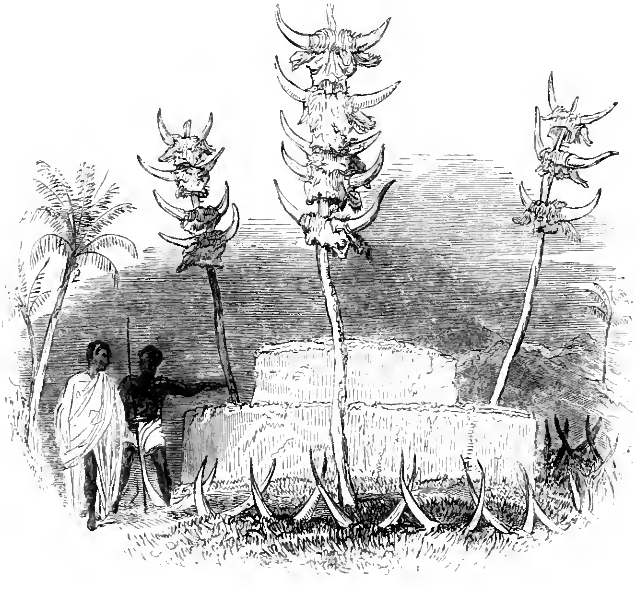
The large slabs used in forming the tombs, as described already, are usually of granite or sienite. The natives have long known how to detach blocks of stone from the mountain mass by means of burning cow-dung on the part they wish to remove, and dashing cold water along the line on the stone they have heated. Having been thus treated, the stone easily separates in thick layers, and is forced up by means of levers. "Odies," charms, are employed in marking out the desired dimensions of the slab, and to their virtue is foolishly attributed the splitting of the stone, though they well know that not all the "odies" in the kingdom would split one stone, if the usual heat were not applied. When the slab is detached, bands of straw are fastened round it, to prevent breakage in the removal. Strong ropes are attached to the slab, and, amidst the boisterous vociferations of the workmen, it is dragged away from the quarry. In ascending a hill, they place wooden rollers under the stone, and move them forward as it advances.

Sometimes five or six hundred men are employed in dragging a single stone. A man usually stands on the stone, acting as director or pioneer. He holds a cloth in his hand, and waives it, with loud and incessant shouts, to animate those who are dragging the ponderous block. At his shout they pull in concert, and so far his shouting is of real service. Holy water is also sprinkled on the stone as a means of facilitating its progress, till at length, after immense shouting, sprinkling, and pulling, it reaches its destination.

When the tomb is erected for a person deceased, but not yet buried, no noise is made in dragging the stones for its construction. Profound silence is regarded as indicating the respect of the parties employed. In some cases a corpse is buried in a dwelling-house *pro tempore*, till the new tomb is finished, when it is disinterred, and removed to its final resting-place with the usual ceremonies.

It has been already observed, that lepers are not interred in the burying-places of the families to which they belong; but after they have been under ground a year, the relatives are permitted to take their bodies up, and deposit them with the customary ceremonies among the sepulchres of their ancestors.

The tombs are occasionally washed with a mixture of lime or white clay; and, though literally "whited sepulchres," furnish to the eye of a traveller a pleasing variety in the objects around him. The entrance to the vault is covered by a large upright block of stone, which is removed when a corpse is taken in, and fixed in its former position at the termination of the ceremony. Small native fans (fikopana) are used in driving insects from the corpse while it remains in the house, and on the road to the grave; these are left stuck in the earth over the grave. High poles are fixed in the earth around the grave, and the horns of the bullocks killed at the interment, are suspended on the tops of the poles, to indicate the wealth of the family, or the value of the tribute thus rendered by survivors to the memory of the departed.



In some cases the horns are stuck in the earth at the corners of the tomb, or fixed in the form of a fence in the earth round the edge of the parapet. This is considered highly ornamental. A pole with a white flag at the top, which had been carried in the funeral procession, is also frequently placed at the east end of the tomb. Formerly the flag consisted of plain white cloth, but since the knowledge of letters has been introduced, the flags in many instances have the names of the deceased, and the dates of their death, exhibited in letters of blue or other dark-coloured cloth.

Those who are desirous of paying great respect to their deceased relatives, and of preserving their tombs in good repair, keep the ground immediately around the graves in neat and excellent order, preserving it perfectly smooth and level, and free from weeds.

At the capital, and throughout the interior, the tombs are unenclosed; but the tribes on the greater part of the coast surround their graves by a strong, but neat and durable, paling, or other fence of wood.

Many of the Malagasy begin to erect their tombs in early life, and make their completion through a series of years one of the most important objects of their existence, deeming a splendid or costly depository for their mouldering bodies, the most effectual means of being held in honourable remembrance by posterity.

This practice induces the belief, that in the creed of a Malagasy, the most complete preparation of a grave constituted the best preparation for it, the grand means of securing bliss beyond the tomb. The reverse, however, we know to be the fact, so far as a future state is contemplated by the aid of that revelation which alone brings life and immortality to light; but an immortality of fame was the only immortality after which the Malagasy were taught to aspire. They knew no higher, and pursued no worthier object.

The sentiments of the nation on this subject, the importance attached to profusion of expenditure, and gorgeous and imposing pageantries in mourning, are most distinctly exhibited whenever the death of a sovereign takes place. In the number of oxen killed, and amount of property consumed, the funeral and mourning ceremonies observed at the death of Radama's father probably exceeded all that had previously taken place in the country, as it is supposed that about 10,000 head of cattle were slaughtered on that occasion. But the observances on that occasion were greatly surpassed by those which followed the decease of the late monarch Radama, which took place at the capital in the month of August, 1828.

On the morning of the 3d of August, it was officially proclaimed that the king "had retired," "had gone to his fathers;" and it was ordered that all, of every rank and age, male and female, with a few exceptions, should shave the head; that the females should weep; that no showy dress nor ornament should be worn; that no perfume or unguent should be employed; that no dress but the lamba should be worn, and that not allowed to trail on the ground. It was further ordered, that no one should ride on a horse, or be carried in a chair; that the work at the ordinary handicrafts should be suspended; that no one should salute another on meeting, nor play on any instrument, nor dance, nor sing; that no one should sleep on a bed, but on the ground; that no one should sit on a chair, or use a table; that no one should use ardent spirits—and the punishment of decapitation was threatened to those who should violate this last prohibition.

The walls of the palace, and of Besakana, a house called the throne of the kingdom, were covered with white cloth, and splendidly ornamented within with tapestries of crimson and purple silk. The gateways were hung with scarlet cloth and pink silk. The roof of the house in which the king had died was covered with crimson cloth; besides which, large quantities of rich gold lace and fringe were employed in the decorations. Troops were stationed round the court-yard. The officers and band wore a white lamba over their uniforms, white being the mourning colour in Madagascar, and crape on the arm. Cannon and musketry were fired every half hour. Immense numbers of bullocks were distributed by the queen among the people.

On the morning of the 11th, the firing of cannon and musketry commenced at daybreak, and continued every half hour through the day; and at eight o'clock the military assembled in the palace-yard, every avenue towards which was thronged with the tens of thousands assembled; but the greatest order prevailed. The space within was entirely occupied, excepting a narrow passage left for the entry and exit of the officers. Troops in full uniform lined the passage from Trano-vola, where the king had died, and where the corpse still remained, to Besakana, whither it was now to be conveyed in state. The place was filled with the tsirondahy, or king's body-guard; the female singers kneeling to the ground; and a number of females holding the fans usually carried to the grave with a corpse. The youths in personal attendance on the king, and the principal officers conducting the ceremonies, were also present.

About nine o'clock, the relatives of the king, the young princesses, and the wives of the judges, left the palace. They had been to take their last farewell of the remains of the departed monarch; and retired, according to the custom of the country, carried on the backs of their servants, weeping bitterly the whole way, and unquestionably many of them with the utmost sincerity of feeling. The great drum was then struck, and continued to beat in the manner usual at European military funerals.

By eleven o'clock the body was brought out, covered with a splendid scarlet pall, richly ornamented with gold lace. This was carried towards the throne by sixty officers of rank. The corners of the pall were held by Mr. Brady, major-general; Corroller, prince and general; Louis Gros, king's architect; and the Rev. D. Jones, missionary. All the Europeans were present, and joined in the procession. The sight of the coffin, at the moment it was brought out of the palace, awakened afresh the lamentations of the people, and renewed their loud and frantic groans and wailing, as if they had a second time lost their sovereign.

The whole of the passage along which the corpse was carried, was carpeted with blue cloth; a fine bull was also killed near the throne, just before the arrival of the body; and over the expiring animal, weltering in its blood, the corpse was carried.* The queen, surrounded by a strong guard, stood at the door of Maso Andro, while the body was carried to the throne, and appeared much affected. Raketaka, the infant daughter of Radama, sat, dressed in the European manner, with her nurse, at another door.

The coffin, covered with the scarlet pall, was placed on a bier in the house, which was strongly perfumed with fragrant gums, and surrounded by a guard kept on duty through the night.

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* The origin of the custom of killing the bull on the occasion, is, like that of many others practised by the Malagasy, involved in impenetrable obscurity. It does not appear to be a sacrificial service, as there is no prayer nor invocation offered, nor any priest to officiate; it is merely shedding blood. But the natives have an idea of something emblematical in it. The lion being unknown in the country, a bull is with them the recognized emblem of courage and strength, and hence becomes with the people an emblem of the monarch. One of the most noble is selected for the occasion, and over it, while just expiring, the corpse is lifted.

On the following day, the 12th, the ceremonies were renewed. The Missionaries and foreigners were admitted to the palace-yard, to unite with the natives in paying their last tribute of respect to the memory of the deceased; and they joined the bearers in conveying the body to the tomb. The ground was covered with blue cloth for about two hundred feet of the distance; and the whole passage on each side was lined with soldiers under arms. Seventy-two of the finest bulls belonging to the late monarch were killed at the time, and the corpse was carried over them as already described. The singing females, prostrate on the ground, occupied almost every foot of the side of the passage along which the body was borne, nor would they move, though nearly trampled to death by the bearers and attendants.

The yard in which Trano-vola stands was thronged with mourners, excepting a square in the centre, which was kept by the military. Within this square a magnificent catafalque had been prepared, surrounded by a balustrade covered with white cloth, and with pillars at each corner covered with scarlet cloth and gold embroidery. To the pillars were attached purple cords, on which were suspended the lamps and lustres used by Radama. The platform supporting the body was splendidly hung with rich scarlet cloth and gold and silver lace; the whole presenting a gorgeous and imposing spectacle.

The members of the royal family placed themselves within the balustrade; and a large number of females dressed in white, wearing long black sashes, and having fans in their hands, surrounded the canopy.

A large silver coffin was prepared by the native silversmiths, in the manufacture of which about fourteen thousand dollars were expended. It was about eight feet in length, four and a half in width, and the same in height. The dollars had been melted, and beaten into plates, which were fastened with silver rivets. Its workmanship was rough, and its appearance clumsy; but the feeling which dictated so liberal an expenditure of wealth, as a tribute of respect to a prince who deserved it so well, was gratifying and highly honourable. An inscription was made on a silver plate, and fastened to the coffin, of which the following is a translation:—

TANANARIVO—1 August, 1828.
RADAMA MANJAKA,*
Unequalled among the Princes.
SOVEREIGN
Of the Island.

The natives had been occupied for several days in preparing a large tomb, or mausoleum, consisting of red earth and roughly-cut blocks of stone. The building is about thirty feet square and sixteen feet high. A small apartment has been subsequently built over it in European style, which is surrounded by a veranda. The interior of the upper room is elegantly ornamented; and a table, two chairs, a bottle of wine, a bottle of water, and two tumblers, are placed in the room, conformably with the ideas entertained by most of the natives, that the ghost of the departed monarch might occasionally visit the resting-place of his ashes, meet with the spirit of his father, and partake of what he was known to be fond of in his lifetime.

About six o'clock in the evening of the 12th, the corpse was removed to its last resting-place in the silver coffin which had been previously placed on a framework of wood in the tomb. A prodigious quantity of the most valuable personal property belonging to the late king, was buried with the body. Of these, one of the Missionaries has furnished a catalogue, amounting to upwards of one thousand articles, including, among others, the following:—

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* Radama, King.

49 Hats and caps.
155 Coats and jackets.
96 Waistcoats.
171 Pairs of pantaloons.
Some of the above articles were richly ornamented with gold lace.
53 Pairs of gloves.
47 Neckcloths or cravats.
54 Pairs of stockings.
37 Shirts.
38 Pairs of boots and shoes.
9 Pairs of gold epaulettes.
1 gold vase, present from George IV. in 1822.
2 Gold musical boxes.
18 Gold rings for the fingers.
3 Watches.
2 Gold watch-chains.
1 Silver tureen and ladle.
2 Silver dishes.
1 Gold spoon.
2 Silver plates.
1 Silver salad-dish.
1 Silver curry-dish.
1 Pair of silver candlesticks.
4 Fine writing-desks.
1 Glass chandelier.
24 Looking-glasses.
1 Pair of crystal decanters.
4 Crystal dishes.
1 Gold-headed spear.
2 Superior gold sword-sashes.
2 Pairs of pistols, richly ornamented with gold.
10 Swords and sabres.
1 Fowling-piece with all its apparatus.
24 Muskets, ornamented with gold and silver.
1 Air-gun.
24 Native spears.

Six of the king's favourite horses were killed—a cask of wine was buried opposite to his tomb—and a brass cannon was burst and buried.*

10,300 Spanish dollars were buried with the king, and 13,952 oxen distributed among the mourners assembled in the capital.

The distribution of the oxen, and the burial of the articles of apparel, might be designed to testify respect for the memory of the departed sovereign; but it seems scarcely possible that the immense sums of money were with the same view consigned to the grave. The government probably took advantage of the popular sentiments of the nation in favour of the inviolate sacredness of the tomb, thus to deposit so large a portion of its treasure in a place, in which it would be safe amidst any civil commotion that might ensue, and to which, in any emergency, it might have the readiest access. The violation of the royal tomb was one of the highest crimes that could be committed, as was shewn in the fate of an unhappy man who was convicted of it in Radama's reign.

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* The cannon was loaded so heavily as to burst, on the same principle as that on which they killed the favourite horses of the king, either from an opinion, that having once belonged to the king, they could not with propriety be used by any other person; or that the spirit, in visiting the place where the body was laid, might be satisfied on perceiving that the survivors had not appropriated to themselves the treasures of their predecessor.

Whether Radama's father had all his specie marked or not, is not known, but the dollars buried in the tomb with him had each a peculiar mark. On one occasion, during the early part of Radama's reign, a dollar was brought to the mother of Radama, then living in the palace. On looking at the dollar, she remarked, "I have seen this before!" and then declared it to be one that had been buried with the corpse of her royal husband: investigation proved this to be the fact—that the tomb had been entered, and some of the dollars stolen; and the man who was detected, was put to death by a slow process of the most cruel torture that the native ingenuity could devise.

Besides tombs, there are also cenotaphs: these generally consist of a low wall, built on three sides of a square. This is intended for the ghosts of those who die in battle, and whose bodies have not been found. Their ghosts, it is supposed, are allured to repose in sacred spots, thus reared for them by the hands of friends, and thereby find that rest which otherwise they would have sought in vain, while wandering with the owls and animals of ill omen in the forests, or paying unwelcome visits to their former dwellings, and disturbing their survivors.

All possible means are employed by the friends of those who die in battle, or during a campaign, to ascertain the fact, and then to have the bones of the deceased carefully brought home for interment. Hence, on setting off to war, it is customary for friends to give a mutual pledge, that, should one of them die, the survivor will endeavour to obtain, and convey the bones of the deceased to his relations. In such cases, they carefully scrape off every particle of flesh from the bones, bring the latter with great labour and fatigue from the most distant parts of the country, and deliver them with great care to the friends of the deceased, by whom they are received with all the expressions of mourning that attend those who die in the midst of their families; the bones are afterwards buried with the usual funeral solemnities.

The Malagasy have also a custom of erecting stone pillars, of considerable height, as memorials, though without any kind of mark or inscription on them. These are called fahatsiarovana, "causing to remember." A name is also given them derived from their position, mitsangambato, "an elevated stone." No particular intention is proposed by these, beyond that of perpetuating the memory of the fact, that such an one (known to his family) erected such a stone to commemorate himself.

During the latter years of the Mission in the island, several of the native Christians were removed by death, and were interred with the rites of christian burial; the Missionaries attending, and engaging in services resembling those performed on similar occasions in England.

CHAP. X.

Native expressions of thankfulness—Different forms of salutation—Customs observed on the return of the sovereign to the capital—Prevalence of common swearing among the natives—Their use of abusive language—Amusements of the Malagasy—Smoking—Feasting—Hunting wild cattle—Description of the mode of taking wild cattle, by Drury—Hunting the wild boar—Fishing—Mode of catching the crocodile—Games at kicking—Throwing at the target—The katra or drafts—Musical instruments—The lokanga and valiha, drums, fifes—Singing—Character of the songs—Specimens of native poetry—Song for the dead—Dress of the Malagasy—Materials of which it is composed—Manner of wearing it—The salaka—The kitamby—The lamba or mantle—Different kinds of lamba manufactured by the natives—Coverings for the head—Native sandals—Articles of foreign manufacture used as clothing in Madagascar—Fondness of the natives for ornaments—Silver chains—Silver rings, beads, shells—Ornaments of ivory—Artificial flowers—Perfumes, native and foreign—Ornamenting the body with scars—Mode of dressing the hair—The European mode of wearing the hair, introduced by Radama—Tragical occurrence among the native females in consequence of the innovation.

The prevailing character of a people is often more distinctly seen in their sports and pastimes than in their occupations: the latter they generally follow from necessity, the former always from choice; the latter is often in opposition to all their inclinations, the former is always in accordance with the spontaneous bent of their tastes and desires. There is also in general a striking resemblance between the habits and the amusements of nations: the amusements of the Malagasy, we are about to notice; and to them a few remarks on the mode of acknowledging favours, exchanging salutations, with other social customs, as the latter are often peculiar and characteristic, will form an appropriate introduction

Whether the noble and generous feeling of gratitude has much place amongst the Malagasy has been questioned. Though often characterized by extreme apathy, they are certainly susceptible of tenderness of feeling, and their customs furnish various modes of testifying their sense of any acts of kindness shewn them, and their language contains many forms of speech expressive of thankfulness. The following are among those in most general use: "May you live to grow old—may you live long—may you live sacred*—may you see, or obtain, justice from the sovereign—may you be loved by the sovereign—may you be loved by the people—may you be raised to the highest rank—and, not least in their estimation, may you be blessed with a large family!"

With all their expressions of thankfulness, considerable action is used: sometimes the two hands are extended open, as if to present; or the party stoops down to the ground, and clasps the legs, or touches the knee and the feet, of the person they are thanking.

The Malagasy have many different forms of salutation, of which they make liberal use in exchanging the ordinary civilities of good neighbourhood, and the common transactions of life, and which form an important part of the etiquette regarded by them as essential to good behaviour. Hence in their general intercourse there is much that is stiff, formal, and precise, at least much that appears so to a foreigner; while amongst themselves the whole is merely an intimation of politeness and good breeding, whereby they maintain a higher degree of courtesy and mutual respect than might be anticipated in a state of society not more refined than that of Madagascar.

When the natives meet each other, instead of observations upon the state of the weather, which they would consider wholly superfluous, they generally propose some kind of inquiry which a stranger to their habits would regard as impertinent. Their forms of salutation vary with the different occasions on which they are called forth.

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* Secure from the power of charms or sorcery.

On meeting upon the road, one man would say to another, "Sara, sara tsy ambaka," which is an assurance that no fraud is intended. Females sometimes use the same expressions; but there are forms peculiar to the sex, which it is deemed more correct for them to adhere to. A variety of questions then follow, such as, Whence are you from? Whither are you going? all which are generally answered in the most vague and indefinite manner, as, From the north; or, Going yonder, to the east.

On returning after a long absence, it is customary to say, "Tongava soamantsara:" "Have you arrived safely and well?" "Tahin andriamanitra, azo ny saotra nareo:" "Blessed of God, your blessing (or benediction) is obtained." The questions as to the object of the journey then become more minute, and the answers more vague, as if intended to baffle rather than allay the curiosity of the inquirer.

In that part of the island where Drury was a captive, he states that the usual form of salutation from wives to their husbands, and from slaves or vassals to their chiefs, was to crawl upon the ground and lick their feet, on their return home from battle or from a journey.

In ordinary intercourse, on first entering a house, a person is usually asked if he has arrived; to which, of course, he answers in the affirmative. He is then asked to come in with the charge to the inmates: "Behold, spread a mat for the stranger!" Having entered, the usual salutations pass; and then the stranger asks, How are the family? We are even here, the family, even all well. To which is answered, Veloma,—"live!"

The customs observed by Radama, on returning to his capital after war, or on any other important occasion, which had called him from home, may not be deemed unworthy of notice.

While still at a considerable distance from his capital, he usually sent a messenger or letter to announce his arrival: "And I, saith Lahidama Manjaka, tell you, the twelve females, (that is, the twelve wives of the sovereign), and the judges, and all the heads of the people, that I am coming home; on Friday, (should that day have been selected), I depart from this place, and on three returns of Friday I shall arrive at Tananarivo—so I inform you. Tell all the people to dress well, for I am coming."

On receiving the message, the twelve wives and judges would send a crier to the markets, saying, "I, saith Lahidama Manjaka, tell the Ambaniandro, (subjects of the Hova government) that I am coming to town on such a day. The brown cloth is to appear—(meaning, that they are not to dress beyond their ability; which injunction is received as implying that they are to dress as well as they can.) Come up to Tananarivo, that we may salute him—let it be seen who will attend on Friday at his own place in Andohalo; say the judges and the twelve wives."

When the king had advanced till within about twenty miles of the capital, cannon were fired, to announce the circumstance, and orders sent to Tananarivo, with directions as to the salutes, the marshalling of the troops, sending palanquins, and other preparations for a public welcome. Prior to the king's entrance into his capital, a vast concourse of people, assembled from the districts, were seated on the ground with much order, awaiting the appearance of their sovereign. The judges occupied their own station on the occasion, giving orders that those who were to cheer should cheer, and those who were to clap their hands should clap, while all were humming or singing the national "Hoo-oo-oo." The females sang some detached expressions in praise of the monarch, such as, Ny Andrianay Ehe—O our king. Tsara Andriana—is a good king. Ny Zanahary nay Ehe—O our God. Tsara Andriana—is a good king.

While the vast concourse of people were thus occupied shouting, clapping, hooing, and singing till the earth and air seemed to reverberate with their demonstrations of joy, the king advanced amidst the shouts and singing of his own immediate attendants, the roar of cannon, and the music of his band. Whether he arrived on his horse, or in a chair or palanquin, he must alight on the holy stone in Andohalo, and from thence proceed to the temporary stage erected for the day, where on taking his seat the national air was played. The people then saluted the king; twenty, thirty, or forty thousand voices uniting in one shout.

The salute consists of a few words, merely to assure the monarch that no deceit is intended, and to congratulate him upon having obtained the kingdom.

Radama then rose and replied. "Well! well! O beloved, even well." After which he recounted his pedigree, repeated his inalienable right to the throne, assigning reasons for remaining absent so long, and recounting his achievements and the progress of the war.

The customary hasina, or tribute, was then presented, after which, amidst shouting, singing, and music, he withdrew from the stage, and retired to his palace; on entering which, his troops saluted him, presenting arms and saying, —may you live to become old, sire—may you not suffer affliction. Veloma (replied the king,) ry malala—live long, O beloved. Corresponding ceremonies usually attend the public or state movements of the sovereign of Madagascar.

Common swearing is almost universal, yet swearing of a much less profane character than that too frequently heard in more civilized countries. In familiar conversation, and especially in making sales in the markets, an oath, meant by way of confirmation, is uttered with almost every sentence.

The people swear neither by God nor by their idols, but chiefly by their mother or by the sovereign. During the time of the late king, the general custom was for the males to swear by the king's mother, and the females by the king. Radama, however, disapproved of this, and sent a sharp kabary, or official message, to the markets to forbid it, desiring that the name of the king and his mother should not be used on every trifling occasion, but only appealed to on affairs of importance, and in a solemn and deliberate manner. The people were still allowed to swear by parents, sisters, and brothers.

In abusive language the Malagasy are not deficient, and, lest it should fall into disuse, a common practice exists, by way of amusement, for persons to form themselves into two parties in order to abuse each other in the most virulent language their imaginations can invent; and those who excel in the most abusive vituperation, obtain the plaudits of the spectators.

Of the amusements of the Malagasy, as they consist chiefly in bodily exercises, a brief notice will suffice.

Many an hour is spent by them, when not occupied with business, perched upon their heels on the walls around their houses, or on any convenient spot for observing the monotonous little that is to be seen. To take a walk for the mere gratification of the exercise, or, in other words, to walk about when a person might sit still, would be regarded by them as an approximation to insanity. The Malagasy think it much wiser not to weary, or even to exert themselves for nothing. Yet some of their amusements consist of the most violent athletic exercise, which would seem incompatible with their apparent love of repose. The truth is, that, like most other human beings, they are acted upon by immediate excitement, so that when an object with which they are pleased is presented to their notice, their energies are roused, and they pursue it with great avidity; but no sooner does the excitement subside, than they return to their quiet, inanimate existence, scarcely distinguished from the repose of the mere animal.

Highly consistent with this state of inanity is their love of smoking—an amusement to which those who are deficient in mental resources, and whose object it is to surrender themselves as passive recipients of a sort of animal dreaming, yet most unproductive of enjoyment, are particularly addicted. In one part of the island a practice of smoking rongona, or native hemp, prevails, which Drury describes as a plant that grows about five feet high, and bears a small long leaf with a pod, which contains about a dozen seeds like hemp-seed. These leaves and seeds are mixed together, and laid in the sun for three or four days successively until they are very dry, and, thus prepared, are fit to be smoked. The pipes used for this purpose are made of reeds, or rather small canes. Sometimes a long shell is used. The quality of the plant is such as to produce intoxication, while the eyes of the smoker look red and fiery, and his whole appearance fierce and savage. It is easy to distinguish those who smoke the rongona, for, while the effect lasts, they are more vigorous and resolute, often acting like madmen. The effect of the plant thus used is so strong, as in the first instance to produce a state bordering on delirium, which is followed by a total prostration of strength, inflammation of the eyes, and other unfavourable symptoms.

Those who are much addicted to it are incapable of any exertion, except during the time they are intoxicated. My curiosity (says Drury) led me to try the experiment upon myself; but it made my head so giddy, that I was intoxicated for the space of three days, and so sick as never to be induced to meddle with it any more."

When the Malagasy receive friends at their houses, their amusements consist in visiting, accompanied by their guests, the neighbouring chiefs; and when sitting in their own house, they recount the deeds of their ancestors, which are handed down from father to son, and form the principal topic of their conversation. They also consult on the best means of annoying their enemies, and arrange plans for future expeditions; during the day, they entertain each other in a sumptuous manner, and were accustomed formerly on these occasions to drink copiously of an intoxicating beverage, while songs, dancing, and merriment were kept up during the night.

The chiefs in some parts of the island never go abroad without a fowling-piece, and a stick tipped with iron at one end, the other being ornamented with a tuft of cow's hair. They seldom take any part in ordinary manual labour, excepting that, after the country has been scoured by a hostile army, and the rice-grounds have been devastated, or have been destroyed by extensive inundations, the master will add his own exertions to those of his slaves, in order to prepare the ground for sowing.

The favourite amusements of the men are hunting wild cattle, and occasionally, though very rarely, fishing. The following account of their method of killing the wild cattle is given by Drury. He describes the wild cattle as being in all respects like the cattle he had been accustomed to see in England, except that their horns are somewhat shorter, and their bellowings deeper. They are without the hunch peculiar to the buffalo or tame cattle of Madagascar, and, when wounded or annoyed, are extremely ferocious and terrible in their attacks upon their enemies. The darkest nights are always made choice of for this kind of hunting. "The people permitted me," says Drury, "at my request, but first ordered me to wash myself as they did, in order that we might be entirely free from the smell of smoke, as well as of all other effluvia. I could have taken two lances, according to custom, but they obliged me to leave one behind, lest two together might rattle in my hand.

The cattle feed only in the night, and, if all these precautions were not taken, could never be surprised, for they are always on their guard, snorting with their noses, and listening as if for the approach of an enemy; we could hear them roar and bellow a great way off, by which we knew where they were, and were always obliged to go round till they were nearly to windward of us, otherwise they would have scented us. As soon as we had got the wind and cattle right ahead, and were within hearing, we walked with all the circumspection imaginable, cropping the tops of the grass with our hands as close as possible, to mimic, as well as we could, the noise made by a cow in grazing. The moment they heard us, they were all silent, not one of them bellowed or grazed, but seemed to listen with the utmost attention, which when we perceived, we all stood still likewise, without a whisper, while three or four, best acquainted with the art, continued cropping the grass. When the cattle had listened till, as we imagined, they took us for some of their own species, they returned to their grazing, and we walked with caution still nearer, mimicking them as we moved softly along.

"At length we got amongst them, so that one of our men was able to approach so near to a cow as to strike a lance into her body. When thus wounded, the animal will give a spring from the ground, and perhaps make a noise as if hurt by the horn of another; but this is so common amongst them, that the herd is no way disturbed by it. Our people therefore struck three or four in this manner, with an intention to come the next morning, and track them by their blood, for it is very dangerous to come near them in the night. As soon as they find themselves sorely wounded, they run from their companions, and will attack the first man they see. They are generally found the next morning actually dead, or fallen down in some wood or shelter of bushes, as if they had been endeavouring to conceal themselves.

"A day or two after this, we had a diversion of another kind. Our dogs had got the scent of some wild hogs that were in a thicket, and were very busy running round it, but could find no entrance for a considerable time. At length, however, they found the path made by the swine, and attempted to enter the wood by it, but the passage was defended by a large boar, who fought the dogs with great fury, and wounded one of them in a dangerous manner. Now, what with the dogs on the one hand, and the swine on the other, there was such a yelping, grunting, and howling, that the woods rang with their noise, so that one would have imagined all the hogs in the island had met there by consent, in order to revenge their quarrel upon us.

"We laid down our burdens, and some of us went up to them armed with guns and lances. The boar was shot by one of our party whose dog had been wounded, whereupon another in an instant defended the entrance, and fought so resolutely, that neither the dogs nor we ourselves could come near the animals that were within the wood, until we had made a passage behind them with our hatchets and lances, and then fired upon some of the most resolute who had then turned upon us. The rest, perceiving themselves attacked from behind, fought their way through the dogs, and ran away, with the dogs after them. Words cannot describe the noise there was, especially after some of them were wounded.

"We found seven dead, besides several others so maimed that they could not escape. We picked out only one or two of the fattest, their flesh being very seldom eaten here; and the eating of this kind of food being deemed contemptible, I declined taking the share which might have fallen to my lot."

The hunting of wild cattle, as well as bull-fighting, bull-baiting, and cock-fighting, appears to have been a favourite amusement in later times, and in other parts of the island than those described by Drury.

In 1824, when Mr. Hastie was in the Sakalava country, on the borders of Iboina, with the king and his army, he writes in his journal, under date of October 11th of that year:—

"The store of rice being very low, and the wild cattle numerous, Radama was induced to halt for a day, that the soldiers might kill and drysalt a stock of beef. Two battalions were ordered out for this purpose, and went forth in four divisions.

"Agreeably to the custom of the country, on the first herd being seen, the party halted, laid down their arms, with the muzzles of the guns and the points of the spears turned to the rear, and an aged chieftain implored for success on their enterprise in nearly the following terms:—'O thou great Rangora! master of these superb plains and herds, be it known to thee, that the mighty king Radama, attended by a formidable army, is thy visitor; and it will only be consistent with thine own dignity, and his exalted rank as governor of the earth, a king unequalled by any other king, that thou shouldst present him with a part of thy superabundant stock, for the use of his attendants. Be it known to thee, O Rangora! that the wants of the mighty king are bounded, but his liberality is without bounds; he is slow in accepting, but lavish in bestowing favours. He comes not in hostile array, but, as thy visitor, in amity. O you *Kotofotsy* and *Taihana!* guardians of your great master's innumerable flocks, let it be your care to do him honour in the selection of the presents that he may order for the use of his royal visitor, so that we, his attendants, may partake of such fare as will induce us to make favourable representations of your attentions to our mighty king, and thereby entitle you to his beneficent consideration. We again repeat, we are visitors in amity, and only claim your hospitable entertainment during our sojourn with you.'

"Before the troops returned, three hundred and forty-six head of cattle were killed, besides the number wounded and followed by the spearmen; two days afterwards, four hundred and thirty-one more were killed by the soldiers."

In the month of February, 1825, the late king Radama, accompanied by the British agent, made an excursion to Manerina, upwards of 100 miles west of the capital, having about 3000 soldiers with him, for the purpose of carrying on the sport on a large scale. Immense numbers of cattle were killed, not less, it is said, than five hundred the first day. The troops, stationed at suitable distances, surrounded a large plain, and then either shot the animals, or received them on the point of the spear.

The tamer pursuit of fishing is occasionally followed in many parts of the island; rarely, however, by angling; sometimes line and hook is used, but the rod seldom, if ever; they take several kinds of fish by means of nets, others by snares of cords; frequently they take eels of a very large size, often grasping them with their hands. Fishing is much more frequently resorted to as a means of obtaining a supply of food, than for amusement; in the former case it is chiefly followed by the women.

The superstitious opinions of the natives in reference to the crocodile, have been already adverted to. In some parts of the island these seem to have been less general or powerful than in others.

Drury describes a mode of killing alligators, which constituted a favourite amusement of a young prince or chieftain with whom he resided. The weapon used for this purpose was a harpoon, with a head fixed upon it, and a rope fastened both to the steel and the staff. "Being thus furnished," he observes, "they paddle along the water towards the alligator, which they generally espy at a distance, as they are accustomed to keep their noses above water, and appear like a floating mass of earth or matted weeds. When they come within ten or a dozen yards of the animal, he sinks to the bottom, and crawls a good way before he stops; but his course is discovered by bubbles that rise, and where these remain they strike, for the alligator will lie flat on its body at the bottom of the stream, with its sides pressed out, when it hears a noise, so that they are often pierced through with the harpoon; though, should the harpoon strike upon their backs or their heads, it will make no more impression than it would upon a rock." Drury further states, that they are sometimes caught also, by the Vazimbas, with a net of ropes, of large meshes, or with snares made with spring sticks, to draw up a noose in a rope, which are placed at the mouth of a rivulet, or small canal. By these means, as many as twenty or thirty alligators are often killed in one day.

A favourite, but cruel and cowardly amusement of the Malagasy, and one in which it might be thought there would be as little excitement as there is risk, consists of throwing stones from a given distance at the head of a fowl, on payment of a trifling sum to its owner. The poor animal is buried in the earth, with the exception of its head, which is left above-ground as a mark; and he who can strike it, obtains the prize, perhaps for the value of a farthing, while the chances being in favour of the owner, he generally obtains a good price for his fowl.

A game frequently carried on, when not prevented by any public mourning, is called Mamely dia manga, "kicking backwards," or, what may be literally translated, "striking blue with the sole of the foot." The game consists in the parties kicking one another in the same manner as horses, asses, or other animals. This accomplishment is sedulously cultivated from youth to manhood, and many become desperately expert in the amusement, if amusement it may be called, where the accidents of sprained or broken ankles and legs are not unfrequent accompaniments. Hundreds at a time occasionally join in this noisy sport, forming themselves into parties, as at an English cricket-match, and rushing upon each other with amazing force, each one seeking to maintain his advanced position, and repel his antagonist by kicking backwards.

Throwing bamboos, tipped with iron, at a target, is a method of accustoming youth to use the spear, and serves as an amusement to many. Trials of strength are also made by lifting stones, and sometimes by throwing them as in the game of quoits.

Seizing calves, and sometimes bullocks, however fierce, by the hump on the back, and clinging to them until they fall, in defiance of all their efforts to escape, is a popular amusement, requiring skill, strength, courage, and agility.

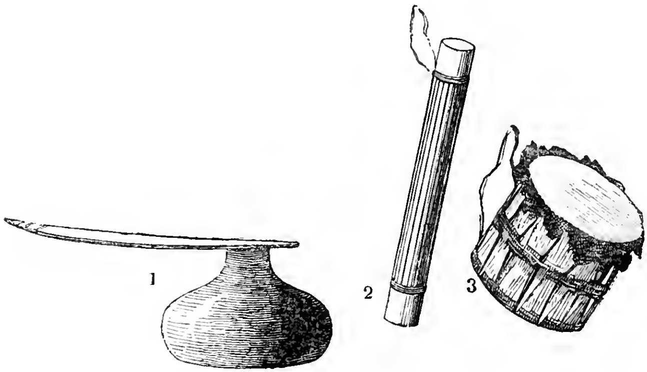
A play with pebbles, by throwing them up and receiving them on the back of the hand, throwing them again from the back, and receiving them on the palm, and repeating this a given number of times without dropping beyond a certain number, is also a popular amusement with young people of both sexes. Tops and kites have also been introduced. Fire-works are scarcely known. Boxing and fencing have been heard of, but do not seem to accord with the genius of the Malagasy; and whoever should attempt to render them popular, would probably be treated by the police as disorderly and quarrelsome persons, and compelled to find some other occupation for their leisure hours.

Another game, of a more sober character, and more general than any of these, is called katra, and somewhat resembles drafts. A large stone or board is prepared, with a given number of divisions, and small pebbles or seeds, about the size of nuts, are used as the drafts or dice. The notice of this game is attended with some degree of pleasure, from having advanced one step nearer to what is intellectual in the amusements of the Malagasy. Thirty-two small square holes are cut in an oblong board, used in playing at this game. Boards of this kind is kept in many of the houses; and in some places the game is followed out of doors, and the square holes are cut in the surface of a rock, or smooth flat stone, near the native dwelling. Small stones are used in playing, and the art of the game consists in moving them from one hole to another, as the pegs are moved in the children's game of fox and geese, until one entire row is emptied. Dealers and traders resorting to the ports on the coast, or the capital, have, in recent years, made some of the natives acquainted with the use of cards; and with many of the people who have been associated with foreigners of the class above referred to, playing at cards has become a favourite pastime, though they do not appear to have staked large amounts on the game. Card-playing may therefore be included in the catalogue of the amusements of the Malagasy.

In speaking of music, we advance still further; and of music, both vocal and instrumental, the Malagasy are extremely fond, though in neither have they yet made much progress.

There are two native instruments of music, the valiha and the lokanga, to which may be added the drum. The valiha is a bamboo, having eight small slips cut from its rind between two of its joints, and then by means of small pieces of wood, used as bridges in a violin, elevated about a quarter of an inch. The player holds the instrument before him, and uses both hands in twitching the cords. The music thus produced is soft and plaintive; the tunes few, short, and extremely monotonous.

The lokanga is somewhat louder, and more generally used by the slaves than the valiha. It is formed of a piece of wood, notched at one end so as to form three or four rests for the cord or string. One string is stretched upon it, and attached to the head of a hollowed calabash or gourd. The music, as might be supposed, is extremely feeble and dull. No. 1. marks the lokanga in the accompanying woodcut, No. 2. the valiha, and No. 3. the drum.



Drums made in a form somewhat resembling those of Europe, are sometimes used. They are made of the hollow trunk of a tree, and are covered with untanned ox-hide, the ends being drawn together by thongs of the same material. They are beaten at one end with a stick.

A few inferior fifes are also used, as well as drums, but neither are well made or musical. Many of the latter are beaten upon the knee, or placed between the knees, and beaten with the hands instead of drumsticks, while the players are seated on the ground. They are chiefly used as an accompaniment to the females' clapping of hands and singing, and answer the purpose of assisting to keep the time.

Few Malagasy voices can be considered good or musical. Those of the men are generally powerful, but harsh, and sometimes strongly nasal; they are, however, less in the habit of singing than the women. In the public assemblies some of the speakers exhibit immense powers of voice, and are able, though in the open air, to command the attention of several thousands of people. In speaking they use considerable action, which is frequently bold, energetic, impassioned, and sometimes graceful, though at other times it is excessively awkward.

The voices of the females, though better adapted for singing than those of the men, are for the most part deficient in sweetness and melody. There is indeed a softness in some of them which pleases, and might be made to charm, if well cultivated, and regulated according to scientific rules. They are most effective in chorus. Very few can gratify when heard singly; and hence, perhaps, the usual practice of singing in chorus. The constant and regular clapping of the hands, as if beating time to their notes, is to the ear of a foreigner, if not exactly discord, a miserable substitute for the harp, the flute, or the violin.

The sovereign has a large band of female singers, who attend in the court-yard, and who accompany their monarch whenever he takes an excursion, either for a short airing or a distant journey.

The songs are principally composed of detached sentences. They are highly figurative, but not so highly sentimental. In general, they may rather be characterized as tame and insipid; the Malagasy language being itself too deficient in descriptive epithets, in adjectives and adverbs of quality, to admit of any fulness, richness, or luxuriance in their songs. Their festive songs are neither rhyme nor blank verse; yet they are not destitute of a sort of cadence, partly arising from the number of syllables admitted, and partly from the emphasis laid on corresponding stanzas. The characteristic feature of most Malagasy singing in chorus, is alternate recitation. The subject of the song being usually its first line, which serves also for the name of the tune, is proposed in chorus; to which a leader replies; and so on alternately to the end of the piece, which contains from twenty to fifty or even sixty lines.

The following is a specimen of a song in praise of the sovereign:—

Chorus. Rabodo does not tread upon the ground. (i.e., does not walk, but is carried.)
Leader. The Rabodo of Andrian-Ampoin-Imerina.
Chorus. Rabodo does not trample on the country. Long live the great life! (i. e., the sovereign.)

In a number of the country villages, where singing is much more practised than in the capital, the natives have attained greater eminence: and it is thought that in some of the provinces of the south, the compositions, the singing, and the music are superior to those of the Hovas. Singing may be heard in most houses in the evening, when music is most congenial to the feelings; and when it is moonlight, the villagers often assemble, and pass a few hours in the amusements of singing, dancing, and clapping their hands, accompanied by whatever musical instruments the village can produce.

Occasionally a travelling bard may be met with, and there is reason to believe that some of the compositions sung by them contain more genuine poetry than any other specimens in the country. The following verses were sung by a bard from Ambohimanarina, who visited the capital, where they were taken down as he recited them, at the request of some members of the Mission. To one of these Mr. B. added an English translation, confining himself to the same number of lines and syllables as in the original, so as to afford the English reader a better idea of Malagasy composition and poetry.

A Song concerning the Dead.

Vain man! observ'st thou not the dead?
The morning warmth from them has fled,
Their mid-day joy and toil are o'er,
Though near, they meet fond friends no more.
A gate of entrance to the tomb we see,
But a departure thence there ne'er will be.
The living waves his signal high,
But where's his dearest friend's reply?
Ah! where are those thus doom'd to die?

Vain man! observ'st thou not the dead?
Sweet words forsake their dreary bed,
There's none the mould'ring silk[*] around his fellow folds,
Or north or south again their visits gay beholds,
Then shall re-echoing vales no longer cheer,
For them the hills no lofty signals rear.
Their shrouded heads unmoving lie,
Unknown the friends that o'er them sigh,
Ah! where are those thus doomed to die?

Vain man! observ'st thou not the dead?
No more their homeward path they tread.
The freeman lost may ransom'd be,
By silver's magic power set free;
But who these lost from death can buy?
Ah, where are those thus doomed to die?
Let me prefer true goodness to attain,
Or fool or wise I'm deem'd by transient fame.
New rice, my friends, your cheerful blessing, give,
So from Razafilahy[†] you thanks receive.

The degree of civilisation attained by a people, and many of the distinguishing features of their popular character, are seen in the dress and ornaments in use among them. Those of the Malagasy we now proceed to describe.

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[*] The corpses are wrapt in silk.

[†] The bard's name.

Considering the distinct sources whence it is evident Madagascar has been peopled, and the comparatively modern amalgamation of any large portion of the different and independent tribes under one government, there is a great similarity in the dress of all its inhabitants. This uniformity appears the more remarkable, when we remember the variety of articles suitable for different kinds of apparel, which the island produces. Cotton, hemp, and silk, of the most valuable kinds, abound in the country, and the arts of spinning and weaving have long been known to the people. To the garments prepared from these materials, may be added importations of cotton, silk, and woollen cloth by merchants and traders from the East Indies, as well as from Europe and America. In some of the provinces, stuffs manufactured from the stem of the banana are fine and light, equal in beauty to those of silk, and woven in the same manner. The cotton cloths made for the governor of Anosy are the most esteemed, being the finest and strongest that are to be found in the island.

The ordinary dress of the Malagasy is not only uniform, but simple. It consists generally of two, and at most of three garments, which are chiefly of hemp or cotton, varied among the slaves and poorer classes, by a cloth inferior to either of these, and manufactured from the bark of the rofia, the banana, and some other trees; and among the rich, by the more soft and costly silk, or foreign cassimere and broad-cloths. Children of either sex, under five or six years of age, in Madagascar are not pressed by the weight, or fettered in the free use of their limbs by the confinement of clothes of any kind; nor do the articles of clothing worn by those of more advanced years subject them to much inconvenience by their number, or the tightness with which they are fitted to the person.

The two principal articles of dress worn by the Hova race are, first, the *salaka*, or piece of cloth about a yard in width, and two yards long. The salaka is worn in a manner similar to the *maro* of the South Sea islanders, being fastened round the loins, passing under the body, and having the extremities in front reaching to the knees. This article of dress is generally of white cotton, hemp, or rofia cloth, ornamented at the ends with borders of various colours. The salaka worn by the nobles, the chiefs, and the more wealthy of the natives, is of the purest silk.

The *kitamby* of the females resembles the *pareu* of the South Sea islanders. It is of the same materials as the salaka, but considerably broader, and is worn round the person immediately below the breast, and reaches nearly to the feet. The females of the Betsimisaraka, Batanimena, and other tribes, especially those bordering upon the eastern coast, wear, in addition to the kitamby, a sort of upper garment, which covers the breast and descends sometimes to the ankles, clothing the arms, in some to the elbow, and in others to the wrist. This part of their dress, which is called the *akanzo*, is of white hempen or cotton cloth, made in the island, or of variously coloured foreign cloth, either of the dark indigo-coloured Indian cottons, called Pondicherry cloth, or white or coloured linen or cotton cloth of European manufacture. The akanzo is worn by the females only; and for those of rank or wealth, it is, like the salaka, often made of silk from India or Europe.

The most important and characteristic part of the native dress of the people, is the lamba or mantle, which varies in dimensions and quality with the rank and circumstances of the wearer. The lamba is worn by both sexes and all classes, both adults and children; for adults it is usually three or four yards in length, and two or three in breadth. The royal lamba, which is held in highest estimation, is of fine scarlet English broad-cloth, bordered and richly ornamented with gold lace, imparting to the figure arrayed in its rich and ample folds, a splendid and imposing appearance. The scarlet lamba is worn by the king on sacred festivals, and other state occasions; scarlet is the royal colour in Madagascar, and though the nobles and others are allowed to wear robes in which scarlet is intermingled with other colours, the use of the lamba or other dress of entire scarlet is the prerogative of the sovereign alone, to whom belongs also the distinction of using a scarlet umbrella.

The other kinds of lamba are the *kasena*, which is of native or foreign silk, woven by the inhabitants in their rustic looms. It is rich, durable, and beautiful in appearance, presenting a series of broad stripes throughout its entire length, amongst which bright scarlet, crimson, purple, orange, and white are the most frequent colours; it is also ornamented with a rich and variegated border, and deep and curious fringe. Next in value to the kasena is the *totorano*, which is of white cotton, with a deep border of dark blue at each end. The third kind of lamba is the *roronga*, which is made of the native hempen or white European cloth. A fourth kind is of native cotton or hempen cloth, dyed of a rich chesnut brown or black colour, with a fringe or border of the same colour. Among the Betsileo, this kind of lamba is frequently used with a sort of beads made of a composition of silver or lead. The remaining lamba is the *jabo*, which is the coarse native cloth or matting manufactured from the dyed bark of the useful rofia, which supplies a large portion of the poorer classes in the country with their ordinary and almost only clothing. A dress of this material may be obtained for about one shilling English money, and multitudes in Madagascar possess, from the cradle to the grave, no superior attire. Many of the slaves wear scarcely any other clothing than a girdle of rofia, or other coarse cloth, but all above the very poorest wear the salaka and the lamba, the latter of which is the almost universal robe of the living, and the shroud of the dead. In some parts of the country, the only clothing of the slaves and poorer classes is a loose piece of cloth, from twelve to eighteen inches wide, of a dark-brown colour, and made of the bark of the hibiscus, simply beaten out after the manner of making cloth practised by the South Sea islanders.

The lamba is worn by all classes over the shoulders, whence its folds hang loosely, reaching nearly to the ankles, the ends being drawn together in front of the wearer. On the persons of the men, it is adjusted so as to hang principally over the left shoulder; as worn by the women, over the right. The Betsimisaraka use the lamba and salaka as well as the Hovas, and, from the circumstance of their dwelling near the coast, are able to procure with greater facility European and other foreign cloths.

Among the inhabitants of the interior, many of the men, when employed in driving cattle, wear a frock with sleeves, made of the common rofia cloth, and in shape resembling the frocks used by husbandmen and carters in England.

The women also wear a sort of spencer, or short dress, made of fine foreign silk, Pondicherry cloth, or printed cotton: under this they secure the lamba, wearing it round them as a skirt, instead of its being thrown over the shoulders as a mantle or shawl.

The *serandrana*, or sash, is used by the nobles and others for binding the salaka, or other under garments, to the person of the wearer. This article is often of costly materials, and rich in its appearance, being frequently of red silk, with beautifully variegated borders. Girdles of different patterns, and beautifully fine texture, are frequently made in the island.

Coverings for the head do not seem to have been generally used by the natives, and are now worn chiefly by the nobles and richer portions of the community at the capital, and at the ports on the coasts. On the coast, the chiefs and some of the people wear a sort of hat or cap of neatly woven rushes, or coarse grass. Caps of more costly and durable materials, of foreign manufacture, are used at the capital. Radama frequently wore a cap of velvet, with a band of broad gold lace; and many of the officers, following his example, wore a similar covering for the head. Hats of foreign manufacture are also in frequent use, the naval or military cocked hats being generally worn by the officers in the army or at the palace. A common red worsted cap is also very frequently used by secondary chiefs and others, in different parts of the country. Since the residence of the Mission families at the capital, ladies' caps, similar to those worn by the wives of the Missionaries, or by females in Europe, have been adopted, to a limited extent, by the chief women of the capital.

Excepting a rude kind of sandal made of bullock's hide, and used when travelling over a rugged path, no covering or protection for the feet was used by the Malagasy; but shoes and stockings have been introduced, and are used by the officers and others who have the means of obtaining them.

Furs of different kinds might be procured in the island, but they have never formed any part of the dress of the natives; nor do they seem to have used for purposes of clothing, at any period, the skins of animals either tanned or with hair on. Skins of animals of different kinds appear to have been universally worn by the several races inhabiting the African continent, from the earliest period of our acquaintance with them; and the circumstance of their never having been used by the natives of Madagascar, although animals whose skins would have been in every respect suitable to the purpose have always been numerous in the island, seems unfavourable to the opinion that the present inhabitants were at first a colony from any part of the adjacent continent, while their using so generally cloth made from the bark of the rofia or other trees, either woven or beaten, furnishes increasing evidence of their having emigrated from the Asiatic archipelago, and having one common origin with the races now peopling the eastern island of the Pacific.

Cottons, linens, and woollen cloths, of foreign manufacture, Indian or European, have long been used as articles of clothing by the natives; and in recent years, dresses made in the European form have greatly increased among them.

The government employ constantly several hundred tailors and sempstresses in making up wearing apparel. These are all to a certain extent slaves; and their bondage and their occupation are alike perpetual, terminating only with their lives. The judges and chiefs wear the same kind of dress as others in similar circumstances. Rank or office is but rarely indicated by dress, with the exception of the chief ministers of the sovereign, or the officers of the palace; these wear a sort of household uniform, consisting of a frock or surtout-coat of dark blue colour, tastefully decorated with black or dark-coloured braid, a cap of the same kind of cloth, with a band of gold lace, or a cocked hat, and in general trousers of blue ornamented with broad gold lace.

Prior to the year 1821, a distinction prevailed, by which no person was allowed to ride in the native chair or palanquin, except the royal family, the judges, and first officers of state, called Maroserana; but this, with other customs of a similar kind, was afterwards abolished by Radama at the recommendation of the late Mr. Hastie. The only distinctive marks of office amongst the Malagasy, in addition to the dress and arms of the body-guard, are such as have been introduced by Europeans, and already noticed. One exception, however, must be made in favour of venerable men, or elders, who often wear a large heavy silver ring hanging from each ear, its weight being such as to pull down the ear like a cord, until the ring touches the shoulders.

Few of the natives are entirely clothed in European apparel: those who have adopted it are usually seen arrayed partly in foreign, and partly in native costume. The present queen frequently appears in public with the large folds of the white native lamba spread over a rich silk, or other European dress.

The Malagasy are fond of ornaments: those generally worn are of gold, silver, ivory, bones, beads, or shells. All classes are accustomed to wear necklaces, earrings, and rings on the fingers, with ornaments in the hair and on the forehead. Bracelets, chains, and charms of various descriptions, are used; but flowers, which have been so frequently adopted by other nations, as congenial to a simple and unsophisticated taste for the beautiful in nature, they never wear by way of ornament. The Hovas adorn themselves with large silver rings on the fore-arm, round the wrists; and some of the tribes wear, on public occasions, large silver chains round their waists.

Besides the rings and chains of silver, large rings of cotton or hemp, covered with small beads, arranged after various patterns, are worn by both sexes on the arms above the elbows, or as bracelets on the wrists. Anklets of the same kind are also common. Ornaments of gold are few, and next to them those of silver are held in the highest estimation. In addition to the chains and rings already noticed, an article of silver, from one to four inches in length, hollow, and slightly curved at the point, bearing some resemblance to the crocodile's tooth, (the name by which it is called,) is in very general use. Sometimes these silver teeth are fastened, with the points upwards, to a fillet worn round the head; at other times they are fixed to the armlets, bracelets, or anklets of the people, or they are fastened to a necklace or bolt hung over the shoulder, and passing across the breast. The extent to which they are worn may be inferred from the number on the person of the chieftain whose portrait forms the frontispiece to the present volume.

Necklaces of beads are frequently used; and suspended from these, on a silver chain, many wear a breastplate of silver. Sometimes the necklace is formed of dollars fastened together at their edges; at other times, a bandage of the same kind, fastened in a similar way, is worn round the head. The Sakalavas seem to be exceedingly fond of ornaments of silver or ivory, and are occasionally seen with a ring in one of the nostrils, as well as a circular ornament of ivory or silver, which they wear on the forehead.

Although natural flowers are not worn, the natives at the capital have lately imbibed a taste for artificial flowers; and at public dances, or other occasions of festivity, a number of females are generally seen decorated with garlands of artificial flowers on their heads, or flowers and feathers in their hair.

Foreign perfumes are highly prized, and tseroka, (castor oil,) with various other unguents, one of which is made from the feet of cattle, are used for anointing their bodies. For their hair, the tseroka (mixed with a powdered leaf of the Ravintsara, in scent like the nutmeg) is in high repute amongst the more privileged classes; whilst the poor seem to find equal satisfaction in the liberal use of the unperfumed fat of the ox or the cow.

Instances are very rare, in which any kind of colouring is used for the face, or other part of the person: a custom, however, prevails among the Hovas, of preparing from the akondro (banana plant) a kind of white plaster, with which they smear their faces. After this has remained for two or three days upon the skin, it is washed off, when the face is considered fairer and more beautiful than before. On some occasions also, when decorating themselves for a public dance, or similar festivity, young persons are accustomed to prepare a sort of pink paint, with which they mark their faces, by imprinting on different parts small pink spots, which are supposed greatly to heighten their charms.

Tatooing can scarcely be said to exist among the Malagasy; yet many of the people are in the habit of making deep incisions, of various forms, in different parts of the body, chiefly on the arms and chest, regarding the cicatrices formed by the healing of the wound as highly ornamental. Little uniformity prevails as to the form or number of these incisions. The natives of the Mozambique shore, on the adjacent continent, are recognized by the numerous and deep scars upon their faces; and hence probably the practice has been derived by the natives of Madagascar, though the latter do not cut the face, nor infuse any colouring matter into the incisions.

The only other colouring matter the natives ever apply to themselves is in the form of a dentrifice. The juice of a shrub, called the laingio, is rubbed on the teeth, which produces a deep black stain; and this, after remaining two or three days, is carefully washed off with water mixed with powdered burnt rice. By this means they preserve the beautiful colour of their teeth, in the whiteness strength, and preservation of which they certainly excel. To one of their customs, worthy of general imitation, that of rincing the mouth with cold water after every meal, this excellence may in part be attributed: and so strong are their opinions in its favour, that in observing Europeans neglect this practice, they have been known to compare them to the inferior animals, who eat, as they think, in a most uncleanly manner.

The plaiting of the hair was, until very lately, considered by the natives as essential to personal beauty, and, from the time it occupied, might have been accounted one of their favourite amusements. The Betsimisaraka and Betanimena dress their hair in five tufts, two on each side, and one behind. The Hovas dress it in numerous plaits one over another, on each side; the women placing gold and silver pins in one or two particular plaits in front, above the forehead. The Sakalavas have also a peculiar way of dressing their hair, and ornamenting it with crocodile's teeth, bones, gold, silver, or shells. They may be generally distinguished by having a small shell attached to the tuft of hair which hangs down to the middle of the forehead. In this mode of wearing the hair, the Betsileo, Bezanozano, and Antsianaka assimilate partly with the Hovas, and partly with the Betsimisaraka, sometimes wearing it plaited, and at other times formed into tufts. Those of rank and property amongst the Malagasy frequently have their hair braided, and arranged in such a manner as to present a beautiful and elegant appearance, being formed into a large number of knots and ringlets, which are tastefully arranged in rows, circles, or sections, and richly supplied with valuable unguents. There are ten or twelve different modes of plaiting, and of arranging the plaits, having their distinctive names. A difference is sometimes, though very rarely, observed between married and unmarried women, in this part of their personal ornament; the former wearing their hair twisted up, and secured on the top of the head, while the latter allow it to flow negligently over the shoulders.

The European method of cutting and wearing the hair was introduced only in the year 1822, when the king, being disposed to adopt the fashion, tried it first upon one of his brothers. The people were astonished at so novel an occurrence; but when, in the course of two or three days, the king himself was seen to have parted with his plaits and curls, the mere dressing of which had sometimes occupied three days, they were silenced, and, whatever they thought, none durst express their dissatisfaction. The example of the monarch made the measure popular, and scissors and combs were in universal demand. The army and scholars were allowed to follow the European custom, but the rest were still compelled to retain the native mode, and these badges of distinction still remain. About a fortnight after this change in the mode of wearing the hair had been introduced, a circumstance of a tragical nature occurred in connexion with it, which, as it illustrates the character of the people, may not be unworthy of a place in their history.

Against the above public innovations, a spirit of daring opposition was evinced by a number of females in a neighbouring district, and a large meeting was held, to which the discontented repaired. Information of these proceedings soon reached the capital. About two thousand soldiers were immediately summoned; they renewed their oaths of allegiance, promising that whoever should be found guilty of creating a disturbance, even if their own parents should be implicated, they required but the king's order or permission to put them to death: after these assurances of fidelity, the soldiers were ordered to guard the capital. On the following day, four or five thousand females assembled at Ambatoroka, a village to the east of Tananarivo, and sent a kabary, or message, to the king, complaining of his having adopted foreign customs, and having allowed his people to be taught by Europeans. In reply, Radama sent to ask them what were their grievances; if they were too heavily taxed, or if they were displeased at having their sons employed in the army; whether he were their king or not, and whether they had chosen some other king in his stead? They replied to these questions in the negative; but said, they were the nurses of the king, and complained because he had adopted the customs of the foreigners; had allowed them to teach him and his people; had changed the customs of his ancestors; and, finally, he had cut off his hair, and drank spirituous liquors. Radama sent back a message to ask, if, being king, he had not a right to do as he pleased with his hair without consulting women; reminding them, it was the inalienable right of the twelve monarchs to do as they pleased, and added, that he would presently give them a proof of this, by taking care that their own hair should never grow again. Having ascertained who were the ringleaders, five of them were selected, and orders were given to the soldiers of their districts and families so to cut off their hair that it should never grow again. The order was mournfully obeyed, and they perished under the bayonets of the soldiers in sight of the multitudes of females, and a vast concourse of people from the town. His majesty immediately sent for the Europeans, told them that a number of persons who were fools, and wished to remain such, had created a disturbance. I have ordered five of them, said Radama, to be put to death; but don't you be alarmed. I am here to protect you.—The bodies of the five women who were put to death, remained upon the spot until they were devoured by dogs and birds. The company of rebellious females were detained where they had assembled during the space of three days, guarded by troops, and without food or shelter. They entreated to be released, and said, that unless the king should exercise mercy, they must all perish. He then sent word that they might return to their respective homes, and attend to their domestic duties, but must leave the business of government to himself, and not interfere again in the affairs of the kingdom. It is not supposed that Radama regarded one of the charges they brought against him, viz. the drinking of spirituous liquors, as belonging to the business of government; though they were not the most proper reprovers. This he passed by in silence, and punished them for interfering with the public regulations which he had thought fit to introduce.

CHAP. XI.

Occupations of the Malagasy—Division of labour—Professional employments—The judges—Officers of the palace—Head-men or elders—Extent to which offices are hereditary—General division of the people into freemen, peasantry, and soldiers—Native farming—Culture of rice—Preparation of the soil—Sowing and transplanting the grain—Modes of irrigation—General appearance of the country immediately before harvest—Quantity of the grain—Causes of the occasional failure in the crop—Reaping—Manner of thrashing—Storing the grain—Description of the granaries or rice-houses in different parts of the country—Culture of the manioc—Period required for its growth—Extent to which it is used—Failure of attempts to introduce European modes of agriculture—Rearing of silkworms—Native methods of manufacturing iron—Situation and character of the mines—Manner of getting and preparing the ore—Description of the Malagasy furnace, bellows, &c.—Nature of the fuel—Process of smelting—Native blacksmiths—Native forge, tools, and articles of native manufacture—Introduction of the art of shoeing horses—Arrival of Mr. Chick from England—Astonishment of the natives at beholding the apparatus of an English forge, and the strength of Mr. Chick—Trials of strength between the natives and Europeans—Improvements in the art of working iron, manufacturing cutlery, and wire-drawing—Native gold and silver smiths.

During the early periods of a nation's existence, while the elements of society retain their simple and primitive forms, the members of the community have their occupations in common. If they dwell upon the shores of the sea, every man is his own shipwright, his own mariner and fisherman; and if they inhabit an inland country, every man builds his own house, cultivates his own land, manufactures his own weapons, pursues his own game, and provides for the wants of his own family. This is the state of society in South Africa, among the aborigines of America, and in the Islands of the South Seas,. The division of labour, the classification of pursuits, and their distribution among different individuals, belong to a state of society that is more or less organized, while the extent to which these arrangements are carried, and the proficiency attained in science or art, mark with distinctness and fidelity the progress of improvement and civilization; and rude and simple as native society was in Madagascar till within the last twenty-five or thirty years, the process of social organization had commenced, the advantages of a division of labour, and a distribution of talent and effort, were to some extent understood and practised; and though, in general, agricultural and pastoral occupations were followed by all classes, numbers devoted their attention, industry, and skill to one particular employment, in which they excelled, and from which they derived the means of subsistence for themselves and their families. In these early stages of a nation's progress towards civilization, the Malagasy had made considerable attainments, when Europeans, little more than twenty years ago, first visited the interior of their country; and since that period, they have, in consequence of the introduction of many of the useful arts of Europe, the employment of letters, the encouragement of education, and the extension of commerce, advanced with accelerated speed.

At the time now referred to, or even prior to the visit of any European to their capital, to their engagement in any treaty with our government, or to the formation of their army upon the European system, this great principle of successful organization of society was in operation among them, and they had not only mechanics and artificers, but those who were devoted to what might be regarded as the higher or professional occupations. These are in some instances clearly distinguished from the occupations which belong to the labour of the hands; but in many cases the men of professional skill not being fully employed in their official capacities, follow the ordinary pursuits of agriculture, mechanics, and trade.

The highest profession is that of judge, of whom there are always a number on duty in the capital, and one or two in the lesser towns. The office is not hereditary. The judges are appointed by the sovereign, and hold their appointments only during his pleasure.

The next in office is the Farantsa, whose duty it is to preserve the general tranquillity and order, and promote the well-being of the people.* In every village, head-men are appointed by the sovereign. The jurisdiction of these men extends over a certain portion of the district, from amongst the inhabitants of which he enrols from time to time such as have reached the age of manhood, and are suitable for the army, or other public service. Under the head-men, inferior officers are placed; the system of obedience to elders or superiors being very extensively enforced. It is established under the idea that seniority necessarily confers authority, and as their own proverbial saying affirms, "Evil is the land without elders."

Next to this brief list of civil professions is the army, where the principle of subordination has lately been strictly enforced; and to both these professions may be added those of the mpanozon doha, administerers of the ordeal of tangina; mpisikidy, diviners; mpanala vintana, discoverers of fate, or astrologers; and the mpanao ody, makers of charms or medicines.

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* The specific duties of the Farantsa will be noticed in the following chapter.

These professions are not hereditary; but as the son generally assists the father while living, acting constantly under his direction, on his death he is generally chosen by the king to the office held by his father, and enters fully upon its duties. Sometimes the son is excused from taking upon himself the office or profession of his father, even though appointed by the king, if disinclination or other causes induce him to decline it; and occasionally, an adopted son, brought up to the profession of his patron, succeeds him in the discharge of its duties.

It will be seen that amongst these professions, poetry and music are not specified; not because they do not exist in a rude state, but because they are not practised professionally. There is, however, a singular class of men who ought not to be omitted here, as professors of prophecy—the mpaminany, or prophets, who, after looking earnestly in a man's face, pretend to foretell some propitious event as sure to occur to him, for which agreeable intelligence they expect an immediate reward.

Having noticed what may be regarded as the professions of Madagascar, we proceed to consider the more general occupations of the people, who, in Ankova, have, in regard to their occupations, been lately classed in two divisions, viz., soldiers and *bourgeois*, or townsmen. The former are generally called sorodany, a corrupt native pronunciation of *soldat*, but they have lately been designated miăra-mīla, a native compound word, signifying "united in seeking." The bourgeois are called borizany, a corrupt pronunciation of the word bourgeois, which is employed at the capital, and in many of the provinces, to designate all who do not belong to the army, and are not employed by the government. Both names are of modern introduction, having been used only since the formation of the army in 1822.

An account of the army will be given in a subsequent chapter, it would therefore be superfluous here to describe the occupations of the soldiers in war and on garrison duty.

The individuals following the professions, or sustaining the offices already noticed, comprise but a very small portion of the entire community; the great body of the people depend on their own exertions, or the labours of their slaves, for the means of support. Their occupations may, to a certain extent, be said to divide them into three distinct classes, viz. the agriculturalists and herdsmen or shepherds; those that are engaged in handicrafts or manufactures; and the traders, and hucksters or pedlars. The former are the most numerous and important; indeed there are few, if any of the people who are not more or less engaged in the cultivation of the soil, or the feeding of cattle. The most important and general department of native agriculture is the growth of rice; in which is probably occupied a larger portion of time than in all the other employments combined, especially about the commencement and the close of the rainy season; the former being the season for planting the grain, the latter for gathering in the harvest. From the extent to which the nation is dependent on the supply of this valuable grain, some account of the manner in which it is cultivated, more in detail than might otherwise be necessary, will not be considered as inappropriate.

Many of the Malagasy in the neighbourhood of the capital, and more particularly in the Betsileo provinces, are very attentive to their rice-grounds, preserving them with great care, and keeping them remarkably clean. After the crop is removed, the ground is generally left untouched for three or four months, after which it is dug up with the native spade in large clods, twelve or eighteen inches square, which are piled up like bricks or peat, that they may be thoroughly dried, and all the weeds destroyed; the period immediately following the rice harvest, being the driest season of the year. After remaining some time in this state, the clods are spread over the field, and mixed with a suitable proportion of manure. Water is then let into the field, and soon softens the clods, which when moist are easily broken, and reduced to a very fine earth. The field is then made as level as possible by a thin sheet of water being conducted over its surface. It is now deemed ready for the seed, which in sowing is literally cast upon the water.

The bursting of the buds of the ambiaty (a common shrub,) which generally takes place in the month of September, is regarded as the commencement of spring, the time when seed-rice is prepared for sowing. This is done by steeping the grain in water for one or two days, and afterwards keeping it in a warm place until it begins to sprout. In this state it is sown, after which the water is drained off, and instead of harrowing the ground, some very fine manure, generally of wood or grass, is scattered over the newly-sown rice. The field is now allowed to remain a day or two without water, until the young shoot, causing the earth to crack, indicates the approach of the blade to the surface. The whole is then again covered to the depth of about two inches with water, which is shortly afterwards drained off. After this, the tender blade soon appears above ground.

The seed is sown very thickly, and the growth of the rice in this stage requires great attention till about five or six inches above the ground, when it is considered fit to be transplanted to other fields; this, however, is seldom done until after the rains have begun to fall in October and

November. The fields to be planted require to be carefully prepared, but this is often done in an inferior manner, and without manure. In preparing the low grounds for rice, the natives often employ cattle. Twenty or thirty oxen are driven into a field, and two or three men employed to drive them over the whole surface, to break and soften the moistened sods. This is extremely laborious, both for cattle and men, but it is found to be the most valuable and effectual method of preparing the soil. When the fields are prepared for the young rice, each single plant is put in the ground at a distance of from six to nine inches apart, the ground being then in a state resembling mud rather than earth. This part of the labour is generally done by women, and it is astonishing with what rapidity their work is performed. The plants are held in the left hand, and with the right are put into the ground at the rate of two or three in a second. A bushel of rice when the ground is prepared in an inferior manner, without drying the earth in the transplanting ground, will on an average produce fifty bushels. If the clods are well dried, it will produce seventy; and if the ground is particularly well done, and manured, it is no uncommon thing to take home one hundred bushels for the bushel sown. The soil when properly dressed is exceedingly fertile; and if the season be favourable, and the crops escape the ravages of insects, and the destructive effects of blight or mildew, the ground is everywhere thickly covered with the prolific grain.

One of the most agreeable objects in the neighbourhood of Tananarivo, and in many parts of the Betsileo country, both as it gratifies the eye, and tends to fill the mind with delight in contemplating the bounty of the Creator thus providing support for a numerous people, is the rice-fields in the months of January and February. An immense plain, of many square miles in extent, unbroken except by here and there a tree or cottage, divided into several thousand fields, varying in size from half an acre to six or seven acres, all covered with luxuriant growing, or healthful yellow and ripening grain, the large-bearded ears of which shine and rustle as they wave beneath the passing breeze, and bend from the weight of the grain sometimes half-way to the ground, while the cluster of stalks produced by a single seed is often so large, that the reaper cannot with one grasp gather it into his hand.

Each field is divided from the rest by a small bank about six or nine inches wide, the top of which being generally raised six inches above the field, forms a smooth foot-path, affording great convenience to the labourer employed in the field. By the side of these paths, little rills are led over the entire plain, so that every field may be watered when necessary. These rills are supplied from canals, which, in the neighbourhood of the capital, convey water to the remote parts of the plain, extending from the Ikiopa, a large and winding river, which flows around great part of the capital, adorning the landscape, and clothing the valleys with fruitfulness and verdure. The channel of the Ikiopa is defended on both sides by strong banks of earth, so that though several feet higher than the fields, they are seldom injured by any irruption of its waters. At times, however, such an accident occurs, and the occasion calls forth all the inhabitants, who rush in a body to the place, carrying with them whatever they can find in their way, to assist in stemming the torrent, willingly sacrificing at such times houses and garden walls, to confine the water within its accustomed channel, and prevent the inroads of the inundation, which would, in all probability, destroy the greater part of the crop.

The canals are cut around the bottom of the hills adjoining the fields of rice, the proprietors of which take the quantity of water required along the course of the canal, which, in some places, extends for several miles. Other canals are led, when necessary, through the centre of the plains, and from these also the adjoining planters draw their water on both sides.

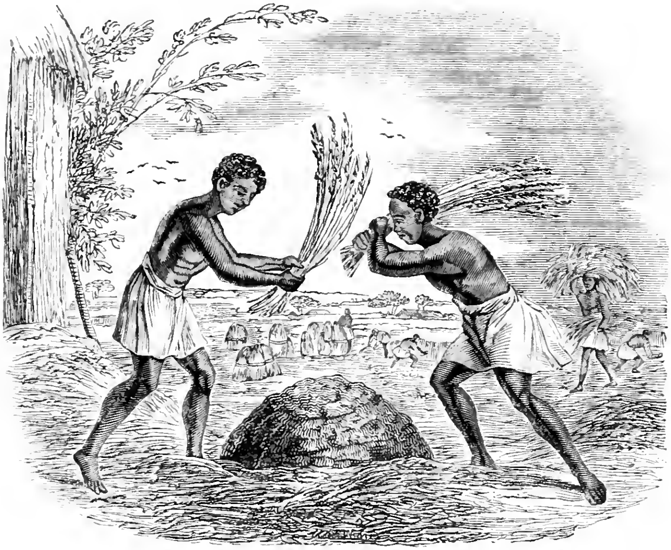
Every field is a perfect level, it being necessary at times to cover it with water several inches deep. There are some plains containing a square mile of rice-ground, the level of which probably does not vary two feet throughout its whole extent. In the more hilly parts of the country, small streams are intercepted as near as possible to the tops of the hills, on the sides of which the rice-grounds are formed in long narrow terraces, which are supplied with water from the stream already mentioned. These terraces vary in size and number, being frequently not more than three or four feet wide, and often rising one above another on the sides of the hill, to the amount of twenty or thirty in number. When covered with water preparatory to sowing or planting, they present a remarkably singular appearance, resembling an immense aqueous causeway, or flight of steps, from the level ground towards the tops of the hills.

The cultivation of rice in the interior of the island is not unfrequently attended with considerable disappointment. The failure may arise from various causes, such as too much or too little water, from the depredations of the locusts, or more frequently a small insect, which eats into the stalk, and destroys it so completely as to leave whole fields to present a withered or blighted appearance. Sometimes also a shower of hail passing over a field of rice nearly ready to be cut down, destroys it entirely; and strong winds also occasion great loss, by shaking the ripe grain out of the ear.

Should no calamity of the kind occur, and the season favour the gathering in of the ripened grain, the family are all on the alert, and active in securing the plenteous harvest, some working up to their middle almost in water. In cutting the rice, the reapers always use a large knife instead of a hook or sickle, and lay down the corn in handfuls on the stubble; women and children follow after, and tie up the handfuls in small sheaves which are set up to dry for two or three days before being carried away.

Besides the rice grown in the manner now described, there is another kind grown on high ground, usually the gently-sloping sides of the hills. In preparing the soil for the latter, the wood is felled, and the least valuable parts of it burnt on the ground. The rice-seeds are planted among the ashes, and, watered by the heavy periodical rains, generally yield as rich a harvest as that planted in the low lands, and so frequently covered with water. The latter kind is called *horaka*, the former *tavy*. There is no difference in the appearance of the grain, and the same price is obtained for both kinds in the market.

The natives of Madagascar have never attempted to accustom the oxen, which are so numerous in the country, to any kind of work, except that of trampling the soil to prepare it for planting; they have neither wagon, cart, sledge, nor beast of burden; the produce of the fields is therefore carried in large bundles on the heads of the slaves from the field, to what may be called the Malagasy threshing-floor. It has been already stated, that the growth of rice requires that the ground should, during a part of the year, be covered with water, and be generally kept in a moist or soft state till the grain is ripe. At unequal distances from each other, in every large tract of country laid out in rice-fields, a portion of ground of considerable extent is left solid, on which one or two houses or sheds are erected, and occasionally a tree or two planted. Here an open space, generally near a fragment of rock or large stone, is left, as a general threshing-floor, on which the rice is beaten from the stalk or straw, before carried home to the granary or store-house of its owner.

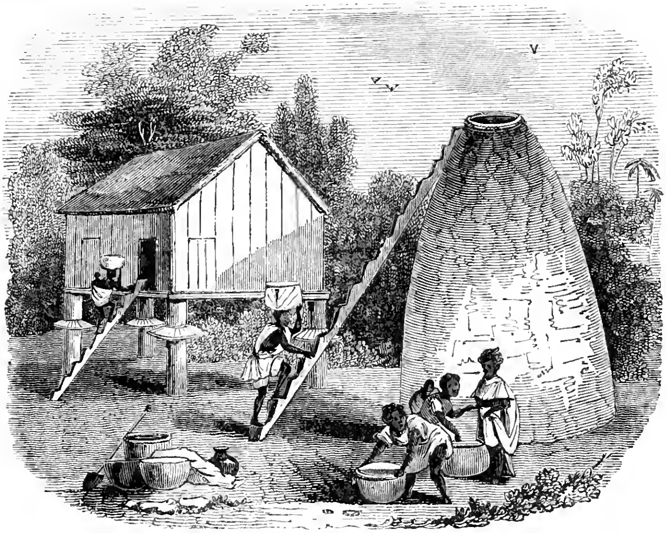


The mode of threshing, if such it may be called, is singular. No flail or stick is used, but the floor, of hard clay, being cleaned, the rice is taken in large handfuls, and beaten against a stone or on the floor, till the grain is separated from the straw; this is continued till the whole is finished, when it is winnowed to separate the grain from the beards and fragments of straw; after which it is carried in baskets, holding about a bushel each, on the heads of the slaves, to their master's house, frequently two or three miles from the field. The loads are heavy, and this part of the labour is often exceedingly severe. The straw is preserved for fuel or fodder for the cattle.

The secure storing of the rice is an object of great importance in Madagascar; and different means are employed by the several tribes, or races, for keeping it from mildew or damp, and preventing its being stolen by the indolent or destitute among themselves, or being destroyed by the rats which abound in the villages.

The Hovas, and inhabitants of Betsileo, preserve it underground, keeping it in circular excavations five or six feet in diameter, and seven or eight feet deep. The form of these rice-pits greatly resembles a bee-hive; the sides are lined with stiff clay, from the floor, also of hard clay, to the summit, where a small aperture is left, which is usually covered with a stone. Through this aperture the grain is poured when brought from the field, and through the same the quantity required for daily use is obtained. These subterranean granaries are constructed with great care, and rice is often kept in them for a long time, apparently without being in the least degree injured. The rice granary is usually near a country-house belonging to the owner, or in the court-yard of that in which the family resides. The cruelty of the rulers of this unhappy people has led them to apply them to other and vastly different purposes, making them a sort of *black-holes*, in each of which six or eight, or a larger number of people, have, for some real or pretended offence against the sovereign, been shut up, till they have died by suffocation.

Some of the tribes construct their granaries above ground, and make them resemble in shape those already described. They are conical, or formed like a bee-hive; and often rise fifteen or sixteen feet from the ground. The walls are thick, and are of clay, carefully wrought, and impervious. No opening is formed in the sides, and only one small aperture is left at the top, which is closed with a slab or stone. By means of a rustic ladder, (generally a pole with notches cut on its upper side,) the grain is carried up, and poured through the aperture. When the rice is wanted, a slave-boy is usually let down through the hole, and the requisite quantity drawn up in baskets.



The Antsianaka, the Betsimisaraka, and the Bezanozano, preserve it in houses raised six or seven feet above the ground by large wooden pillars, in one part of which there is usually a projection, very smoothly polished, to prevent the ascent of rats. The rice-houses often afford shade or shelter to the people. A ladder, similar to that used to reach the summit of the conical-shaped houses, is also fixed against the door of the elevated granaries.

This kind of granary, or storehouse, is generally erected near the dwellings of the owners of the rice; and in order to the greater security of this, one end of the building is frequently used as a lodging-place for a slave. Hence a female may sometimes be seen ascending towards the door, with a young child, secured only by the folds of the lamba, hanging at her back, apparently experiencing no inconvenience from the rugged and narrow ladder or stair by which alone she can gain admittance to her dormitory.

The growth of rice is the most important agricultural occupation of the Malagasy; second to this, is the culture of the manioc, called by the natives mangahazo, i. e. purple wood, from the colour of the stem. The manioc is usually cultivated in enclosed fields; the fence consisting of a bank of earth about three feet high, and planted with songo-songo, *euphorbia splendida*, or a mud wall, the top of which is thickly set with splinters of bone, in a manner resembling that in which fragments of glass are fixed on walls in England. When the ground has been well dug, pieces of the stems of manioc, about a foot in length, are procured, either from the redundant branches of crops ready for gathering, or from crops recently gathered. These are simply thrust into the ground in a slanting position, leaving about a third portion of each stem above the soil, which is gently trodden down upon the plant with the foot. The slips are fixed about twelve inches from each other. When the plants begin to grow, which is generally in about a fortnight, manure is scattered over the soil. After the field has been planted nine or ten months, the weeds are carefully removed, and a few months afterwards the manioc is ready for use. From fifteen to eighteen months may be required between the planting and the harvest, so as to allow two rainy seasons for the crop; the first about the time of planting, and the other about the time of ingathering. The whole field is seldom gathered at once, but is collected by the family as required for use or for sale. The roots are usually from eight to twelve inches in length, and three inches in diameter. They are prepared for use by scraping off the outer rind, washing them, and boiling them well. Occasionally, the roots are baked in hot embers. Manioc-roots are also sold in the markets, cut into small pieces, and dried in the sun, in which state they are more easily preserved, and require less cooking, than when first taken from the ground. The roots are sometimes eaten without cooking, as raw turnips are eaten in our own country, by persons passing through the fields; and a custom similar to ours prevails in Madagascar, of permitting a person to gather and eat in such circumstances, as if by force of hunger; but to gather and carry out of the field, would be considered theft, and be punished accordingly. The natives are extremely fond of manioc; and though they prefer rice, the former is extensively cultivated, especially as it grows well on the sides of hills, and on ground higher than is suitable for rice. Its appearance, when cooked, resembles that of parsneps, to which vegetable it is not altogether dissimilar in flavour.

In the Mauritius, the manioc is scraped, dried, and afterwards made into cakes, in which form it is extensively used on most of the sugar plantations.

To these, the chief departments of native agriculture, the growth of wheat and oats were added by the late Mr. Hastie, and by some of the Missionaries, who taught the natives how to sow and use them. These, especially oats, grow well in Imerina, where crops have been seen to equal those of England. The plough and harrow were also introduced, and oxen broken in, to cultivate the ground, to the great astonishment of the natives. But, like the people of many other countries, they preferred their own slow methods of preparing the ground, to the adoption of readier plans and superior implements.

Besides the growth of other edibles, and the care of their gardens, cotton is cultivated to a considerable extent in Ankova, Antsianaka, and in Betsileo. The rearing of silk-worms occupies a large portion of the attention and time of many of the inhabitants of Imerina. The silk-worms of Madagascar are of a different kind from those of India; they are larger, and very hairy. They are fed upon the leaves of the pigeon-pea, *cytisus cajan*, called ambarivatry. The seed of this plant, which resembles the common pea, is generally sown in a space of ground from three to four acres in extent. When the plant is grown, and in full leaf, the silk-worms are introduced, they feed upon the leaves, and then spin out their silk in the open air.

The manner in which the natives prepare arrowroot, which grows in the Sakalava country, for food, is to dig it up, wash it, and rub it upon a rough stone, in a vessel containing water. Here it remains for some time, when the water is poured off, leaving the arrowroot at the bottom. It is then taken out and dried upon a mat in the sun, after which it is ready for use. It is generally boiled in milk, which abounds in this province.

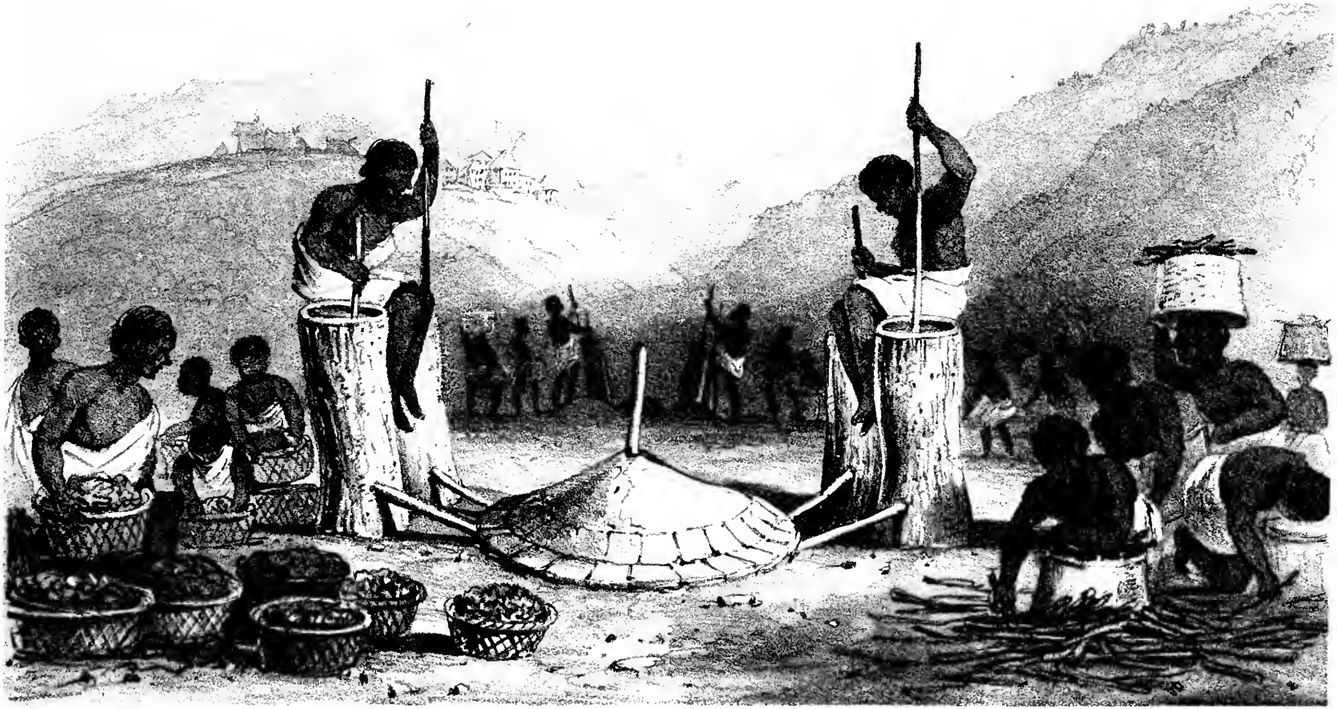
Next to the cultivation of the soil, the occupations at present most important to the Malagasy, though perhaps of comparatively modern origin, are those connected with the working of iron. Their attainments in this useful department of labour, though exceedingly imperfect, yet exhibit in a favourable light the ingenuity and perseverance of the people. It has been already stated, that iron abounds in every part of the interior of Madagascar, especially in some of the central and northern provinces. Whether the natives were acquainted with the properties of this valuable metal prior to their intercourse with Europeans, is not known, but they have long been accustomed to prepare and use it.

It is stated by the natives, that the working in iron was first practised in Imerina about a century ago, viz. in the reign of the grandfather of Radama. It has certainly been used during a longer period in other parts of the island, as the native foundries for smelting iron are noticed by Rochon, and is also mentioned by the writers of still earlier accounts. In the Betsileo country, and in some of the other provinces, the iron ore is found in large quantities on or near the surface of the ground, whence it is gathered up in baskets, and smelted for use. In several districts, within fifty miles of the capital, considerable quantities of ore are procured in this manner. The iron used in the capital, or obtained for the service of government, is procured chiefly from the north and west parts of the country, between forty and fifty miles from Tananarivo. Here are situated what may be termed the iron mines of Ankova; but though they appear to have been worked for many years, little progress has been made, even in examining them much below the surface. Mr. Hastie, who visited one of these mines in 1817, states, that upwards of a hundred different openings to the mine had been made, each in size being about three feet square, but that none of them were twenty feet deep: the mine, therefore, can scarcely be said to be opened. Mr. Hastie was informed that about four miles farther west a mine of richer ore had been discovered, and that, from this more recently-discovered mine, the natives, at the time of his visit, easily obtained all the ore they required. Most of the iron used in the central parts of the island, is found in the mines of Antsianaka; large quantities of ore are also obtained in the district of Ambatolehivy, about fifty miles from the capital in a westerly direction, and near the lake Itasy.

When visited by the Missionaries, the natives have been found either gathering the ore from the surface of the ground, digging for it in the plain, or at the foot of a mountain, but seldom penetrating above five or six feet deep. Their method of smelting it is exceedingly curious. Their foundries, if such they may be termed, are always situated near the bank of a river, or running stream of water; sites of this kind are selected on account of the convenience of the water in washing and purifying as much as possible the ore before it is placed in the furnace. The ore is washed, and then broken into small pieces not larger than nuts; it is then repeatedly washed in the river, for the purpose of separating, as much as possible, the earthy particles from the iron, which, after repeated washings, is gathered up in large coarsely-wrought baskets, and kept till submitted to the action of fire. The furnace and its appendages are exceedingly rude and simple in their construction; and the ore, at best, is but imperfectly smelted. In building the furnace, a hole about six feet in diameter, and one or two feet deep, is sometimes dug in the ground, at other times the earth is only levelled. The walls of the furnace are of rude stone-work, built up to the height of three or four feet, without mortar, and thickly plastered on the outside with clay. No aperture is left in any part of the wall for the purpose of drawing off the metal. The blast for the furnace is obtained by a singular and ingenious contrivance, very much resembling those in use in some parts of south-eastern Asia. Two rude cylinders, about five feet long, the aperture of each from four to six inches in diameter, are formed out of the trunks of trees of hard wood; these are made air-tight at one end, and are planted in the earth, about a foot apart, in an upright or slightly-inclined position, within about eighteen inches or two feet of the furnace; a hole is made in each cylinder, a few inches above the ground, into which one end of a bamboo cane is inserted, the other entering a hole made in the stone or clay wall of the furnace; a rude sort of piston is fitted to each of the cylinders, and the apparatus for raising the wind is complete.

No coal has yet been found in Madagascar, and charcoal is the only fuel employed in smelting the ore. On this account, the furnaces are generally built in those parts, of what may be termed the iron districts, that are nearest to the forests where the charcoal is made. In the provinces remote from the capital, charcoal is burnt, and iron is worked by the chiefs and their people, or by native labourers for their own advantage; but in Imerina and in Antsianaka all the iron obtained is for the service of the government, hence five or six hundred men are constantly employed by the order of government in burning of charcoal for the oundries in the province, and the smitheries at the capital. The only return these men receive, in the shape of compensation for their labour, is exemption from certain taxes levied on other members of the community. The charcoal burners, as well as the miners and founders, are, however, a sort of government slaves; they live in the forests, or near the places where the ore is found, and they dare not leave their occupations on pain of death. The charcoal, as well as the ore, is brought in large baskets, in which it is kept near the furnaces.

In smelting the iron, they first kindle a fire in the bottom of the furnace; over the fire they spread a quantity of charcoal, and then throw in the ore, either mixed with



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Iron smelting

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charcoal, or spread in alternate layers, till it reaches the top of the walls. Over this, a sort of covering of clay, in a conical shape, with an aperture in the centre, is occasionally spread. In procuring the blast, the pistons are sometimes worked by a man sitting on the inner edges of the two cylinders, holding the shaft of one of the pistons in each hand, and alternately raising and lowering them by the action of his arms. Sometimes the man working the cylinders stands on a low bank of earth raised behind them.

There are, in general, two cylinders to each furnace; but when one only is used, it is of much larger dimensions than those already described, and the piston is worked with both hands. The contents of the furnace are brought to a white heat, and kept in this state for a long time; after which, the fire is allowed to go out. The covering is taken off; and the iron, which is described as being partially melted, and forming one solid, or a number of smaller masses, at the bottom of the furnace, is removed, beaten with a hammer, and then again submitted to the fire, prior to its being conveyed to the capital for the use of the native smiths.

Rude as the processes of mining and smelting are at present in Madagascar, yet from the number of men employed, the nature and variety of their occupation, the value of the mineral which they are rendering available for many of the purposes of civilized life, and the activity with which the natives pursue their respective departments of labour, few scenes in the country are in many respects more interesting to a foreigner than those exhibited on a visit to the mines in the province of Ankova.

In the working of iron, the natives seem to have made greater advances than in smelting the ore; the art, however, may still be regarded as but in its infancy among them. In some parts of the island the smiths reside in different villages, and mingle promiscuously with the other portions of the community; but near the capital, where many hundreds are the servants of government, they sometimes congregate together, and form the majority of the inhabitants of a village. When this is the case, they sometimes erect one or more sheds, in convenient spots adjacent to their dwellings, and pursue their work together; but in general, the forge of the native smith is fixed in his house, usually at the south end of the building. The whole apparatus is exceedingly simple. The fire, which is kindled on the floor, is surrounded by three or four stones, through one of which a hole is perforated, to admit the end of the bamboos, fixed in the cylinders, that answers the purpose of bellows. These are smaller, but in other respects resemble those used in smelting the ore. The pistons are worked by an assistant or a slave. The anvil, which is about the size of a sledge-hammer, is either fixed in the ground near the fire, or fastened to a thick and heavy board. The water-trough is placed near, and the smith, when at work, sits or squats on a piece of board on the ground; his assistants sometimes sit, but more frequently stand, on the opposite side of the anvil, ready to strike with larger hammers, according to his directions.

Until the arrival of the artisans who accompanied the Missionaries to the capital in 1822, the articles in iron manufactured by the people were exceedingly few, and the workmanship clumsy and unfinished; they consisted chiefly of spears and javelins, knives, hatchets, and spades, chisels and hammers, a rude sort of plane-irons, and files, pots, spoons, and lamps. Shortly before the arrival of the

Missionaries, they had begun to make nails; but of the methods of making hinges, screws, and nails, excepting those of a simple round form, they were ignorant. In connexion with this subject, Mr. Jones, one of the first Missionaries in the island, mentions an occurrence, which places in a striking point of view the advantage which a Missionary may derive from even a slight acquaintance with some of the most common and useful arts of his native land.

Speaking of their nails, Mr. Jones remarks, "They made nails, but they were round, and not square. I was the first, I think, that taught them to make a square nail. Towards the end of 1820, a favourite horse, sent to Radama by Sir R. T. Farquhar, in the charge of Mr. Hastie, in the previous year, lost one of his shoes, and there was no person in the capital who knew how to shoe a horse. Seeing the anxiety of the king, I said to him, If you will trust me, I will nail on the old shoe. The king was exceedingly pleased, and wished me to do it. I made a model of a horse-shoe nail, and the native smiths made some nails exactly like the model. The horse was brought into one of the royal houses; and the king, his officers, smiths, &c. assembled, to witness the novel transaction. While I was driving the nails into the animal's hoof, the king frequently cried out, Take care, take care, don't hurt the horse—don't hurt the horse! I continued driving the nails, clinched them, rasped the foot, &c., and the horse was led out unhurt, to the great astonishment and delight of all present, who appeared, from this trifling circumstance, to attach increased importance to our residence among them. I should not have attempted it, had I not often nailed on old shoes when I used to take my father's horses to the blacksmith's shop in Wales. After this, the Malagasy smiths made these sort of nails, as well as horse-shoes, and shod the king's horses, though they did it but clumsily until the arrival of the smith sent out from England.

"Formerly they had no locks; but Europeans, since the commencement of the Mission, have taught the natives to make several kinds of locks. A very clever smith once borrowed a patent padlock from me, which he opened, and having examined it thoroughly, made one exactly like it."

Mr. Chick, an excellent artisan sent out by the London Missionary Society in 1821, was the first European smith who settled in the interior of Madagascar; and to him the natives of Ankova especially, are indebted for their improvement in the art of working in iron. He reached the capital in 1822, and fixed his residence at Amparibe, where he erected his shop, and fitted it up in the European style, as far as circumstances would admit. Mr. Chick was himself a powerful man; and the tools, the bellows, the anvil, and the large sledge-hammer which he used, filled the natives with the greatest astonishment. The report of his great strength soon reached the palace; and shortly after he began his work, the king, with a number of his officers, paid him a visit. Mr. Chick's boys were at work at an anvil of a middling size. A spare one, of considerable weight, was standing on the floor in another part of the shop; and the king, after looking about with admiration for some time, told his officers to lift the anvil that was standing on the floor: each in his turn put forth his utmost strength, but could not raise it from the ground. "What!" said the king, "are you all conquered? Let me try." His majesty then laid hold of it with all his might, and tried to raise it from the ground, but with no better success than his officers. Aoka izay, (said the king,) avelao mba atao ny vazaha ankehitriny—

"Enough; let the white man try now." Mr. Chick then lifted the anvil to a considerable height from the ground, to the great surprise of all present; and it is singular to notice the first impression which this evidence of the superior strength of the Englishman produced on the minds of the king and his suite: they all concurred in declaring that it would be dangerous to fight with such men.

A number of youths were placed, by order of the sovereign, under the charge of Mr. Chick, as apprentices, and were carefully instructed by him in the several branches of his art. When the king commenced building the palace, Mr. Chick furnished the iron-work for it; while thus occupied, he had about two hundred and fifty native smiths employed under him, and from that time may be dated the improvements made in smithing by the natives. Mr. Chick's work at the palace entirely ceased when Radama died. He was employed by the present government to furnish the iron-work for the mills erected by Mr. Cameron at Alakaly, and had under him about two hundred persons, who had every opportunity of improving themselves, and learning the more difficult branches of the business.

Many of the native smiths are now able to make hinges, screws, and a variety of the most valuable articles of iron used in civilized life. They have also attained considerable proficiency in wire-drawing. In making brass or iron wire, they beat the rods till they are nearly reduced to the size required, when they are heated, and drawn through holes in a plate of iron or steel till brought to the proper size. The wire is drawn through the holes by a rude sort of winch, turned by one or two persons.

It is a subject of deep regret, that in recent years their skill in the manufacture of cutlery and hardware has been employed in the fabrication of implements of war, more dangerous and fatal than the assagai or spear which formerly constituted their chief weapons. Great numbers of swords and bayonets have been made by the native smiths, in obedience to the orders of the government; and a short time before the Missionaries and the artisans left the island, the queen entered into arrangements with some natives of France to establish a manufactory of muskets in the vicinity of the capital.

The native goldsmiths and silversmiths exhibit considerable ingenuity in the manufacture of rings, chains, and various ornaments of the precious metals, which are obtained from foreign traders. Silver dishes, mugs, and other drinking vessels, and spoons, for the use of the sovereign and others, are wrought by them in a manner highly creditable to their skill and perseverance. Bowls, dishes, and plates of tin and lead, in imitation of those taken from Europe, are manufactured to a small extent among them. The wire for their chains, both gold and silver, which are exceedingly fine, is made by first melting the metal, beating it into long thin rods, and drawing it through holes in a plate of iron, by a process similar to that employed in drawing wire of brass or iron.

CHAP. XII.

Felling of timber—Number of persons constantly employed as woodcutters—Amount of labour required to convey the timber to the capital—Native coolies, or bearers of burdens—Method of splitting trees for planks or boards—Introduction of the use of the saw—Native carpenters—Character of their work—Masonry in Madagascar—Native potteries—Articles manufactured—Native kilns—Anecdote of Radama—Introduction of brick-making—Malagasy rope-making, twine-spinning, and basket-making—Introduction of the art of tanning—Immense quantity of hides provided by the government—Native methods of spinning and weaving—Simplicity of the Malagasy loom—Excellence of the native cloths—Preparation of indigo—Methods of dyeing—Domestic occupations of a day in Madagascar—Native hawkers or pedlars—Fondness of the Malagasy for traffic—Native markets—Number, designation, order, &c.—Prices of articles—Money-changers—Table of moneys—Value of labour—Foreign commerce—Chief exports and imports.

Intimately connected with the occupations described in the preceding chapter, and equally important to the Malagasy, is the felling of timber, and the working in wood. Forests of varied extent abound in different parts of the country, and an immense belt of forest, of two or three days' journey in width, surrounds the interior of the island. These forests yield abundance of timber, of different colour and texture, and of various degrees of hardness and durability. Timber is exceedingly dear at the capital, being brought from the extensive forest of Angavo, which stretches to a great distance on the north and south of Antananarivo, from which it is about forty miles distant. Multitudes of the natives are constantly employed in cutting wood in the forests for the government, and others in dragging it to the capital.

To fell the timber in the forest, for the use of the sovereign, is a service devolving upon the woodmen of government. This work employs about seven hundred men, who are, consequently, called "The seven hundred." To drag the timber from the forest, is an occupation in which all the districts in the neighbourhood are required by proclamation to engage, with the exception of the privileged classes, who claim some patent of immunity. The superintendence of this service is committed to one of the judges, who, as occasion may require, issues his directions to the head people of the districts and villages; these give their orders to the peasantry, stating the quantity demanded, and the time specified for its being delivered at the capital.

The whole population is always liable to be employed on government work, without remuneration, and for any length of time. Hence it has happened, that many have become government smiths, carpenters, &c. and have continued such for life. In connexion with these occupations, those of the marmittes,* native coolies or bearers of burden, may be mentioned: they belong almost exclusively to the race of the Bezanozano, the extent and situation of whose country have been already described.

Numbers of the people are employed through life in felling and splitting of trees as a means of subsistence. They convey, with immense labour, the trees or thick planks which they cut in the forest, to the timber-markets, of which there are several about midway between Antananarivo and Angavo, and to which the builders and others repair for the purpose of making purchases. ·As the natives of Madagascar have never employed their oxen as beasts of burden, or trained them to the yoke, their heavy trees are all conveyed by men employed to drag them from the forests to the places where they are used; and it is to this cause that the high price of timber at the capital is chiefly to be ascribed. Many of the trees are brought to the capital whole, others are split into planks. Formerly, like the natives of the South Sea islands, and some other parts, the Malagasy never thought of obtaining more than two planks or boards from a single tree, however large that tree might be. This they effected by splitting the tree in halves with their hatchets and chisels, or wedges, and then chopping away the outside till it was sufficiently reduced to answer the purpose for which it was intended. The woodcutters still obtain the thick boards they bring to market for sale in the same manner; but many of the natives at the capital have been taught to use the pit-saw, and obtain as many boards as the dimensions of the tree will admit.

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* Maro-mita—many passing or crossing to and fro'.

Prior to the settlement of Europeans in Ankova, the carpentry of the natives was as rude and simple as their work at the forge. The use of the saw was unknown; their tools, in 1820, when the first Missionaries arrived amongst them, consisted of a hatchet, chisels of different sizes, a rude sort of plane, a wooden hammer or mallet, a drill or borer, worked by twisting it between the palms of the hands, and a rule, or graduated measuring-rod, six or eight feet long. Since that time, tools, used by workmen in Europe, have been introduced, and have been readily adopted by the native carpenters. Their work was often strong, and usually neat, and in appearance well finished. A description of the native houses, the construction of which formed the chief occupation of the carpenters, has been already given. They were, in some parts of the island, raised eighteen inches or two feet above ground, by means of low posts driven into the earth; the frame of the house was joined together by mortise and tenon, notches and pins, with fastenings of the fibrous roots or bark of tough and durable plants, and were often ingeniously and firmly bound together, though the entire building did not contain a particle of iron.

The doors and windows of the Malagasy houses generally consisted of a single board, and were opened or closed by sliding them backwards and forwards in a groove, at the top and bottom. The sides and ends of the house were boarded; the boards were fastened together by the edge of one board being fitted into a groove formed in the edge of the next. The chief article of furniture in all the houses was a bedstead, supported by four posts, and fixed against the side or end of the house. This was fastened with pins, or tied together with the tough elastic fibres of a native plant.

The only remaining employment connected with the construction of the native dwellings, which it is necessary to notice as affording occasional occupation to large bodies of the people, is the putting on the roof or thatch, and the preparation of the stems of reeds for the structure of an inferior kind of hut. But so essential is it considered for all men to be acquainted with thatching and rice planting, and for all women to be skilled in weaving, that the practice of these arts may be considered not as distinct handicrafts, but as the ordinary work of the whole population.

The native carpenter formerly pursued his work in his ordinary dwelling-house, or squatting on the ground in the open air. In 1821, the saw was introduced to Madagascar, and the natives taught the use of it by Monsieur Le Gros, a French carpenter, who introduced many improvements in the native methods of working in wood, and taught them how to make glue, and to use it in joining boards together.

The manufacture of large dishes, or fans for winnowing and cleaning the rice, of wooden bowls, and the preparation of wooden handles for their spades, occupied many of the native carpenters. Lathes have within the last few years been introduced, and many of the natives had made considerable proficiency in the art of turning, when the Missionaries and the artisans were obliged to leave the country. In the year 1826, Mr. Cameron, an intelligent artisan, whose scientific attainments were highly respectable, and who was acquainted with building and machinery in general, joined the Mission, and instructed many of the natives in the most approved methods of working in wood; and by the buildings he erected for the government, and the number of natives whom he taught as apprentices, would have greatly promoted the civilization of the people, had not the cruel and bigoted persecution of the Christians by the heathen government obliged him to leave the country. Many of the natives have, however, made respectable proficiency in building, carpentry, and joinery, under the instructions of Monsieur Le Gros and Mr. Cameron.

The chief works in which masonry is employed in Madagascar, are the walls and pavement in the court-yard around the houses of the sovereign, at the capital, and the chiefs in different parts of the country, and in the construction of the tombs and other monuments of the dead. The stonemasons quarry their stones not by boring and blasting them with powder, but by heating them with a fire kindled along the line in which they wish to detach a piece from the rock, and then dashing water on the parts they have heated. The masons were not accustomed to saw their stones, but hewed their surfaces perfectly smooth and level with small pointed hammers. In paving, or erecting their structures of stone, they used a kind of red earth for cement, until 1828, when Mr. Cameron discovered lime in the province of Imerina, and taught the people to burn it, and prepare excellent mortar. Many of the tombs and cenotaphs of the nobles and warriors are durable monuments of the industry, perseverance, and skill of the native masons, and promise much for the nation, with the great advantage which the discovery of excellent lime will afford them.

Another important occupation, which has been long followed by the people, is the manufacture of earthenware. Earthenware is used in every house, and potteries are found all over the island. The large jars used for holding water, or for fetching it from the streams, and other kinds of coarse earthenware, are well made and durable; it is polished with a substance resembling plumbago, found in several of the provinces. Their lighter earthen or crockery ware is much more brittle than that of England, but is still highly serviceable to the natives; and the progress they have made in this useful art, shows that they are far advanced above a state of barbarism. Large quantities of earthenware are made in the eastern parts of Aanradrano, where a very suitable kind of clay is found in considerable abundance. In this department of labour, females chiefly are employed.* When the articles are sufficiently dry, a sort of kiln is prepared by digging a hole in the earth, or building a circular wall on the surface, on which husks of rice are strewn; the vessels are then placed in the hole or kiln, and covered with rice-husks, which are kindled, and suffered to burn gradually, without being allowed to blaze. Fresh husks are added to the fire till the contents of the kiln are considered as sufficiently burnt, when the fire is gradually extinguished, and the vessels afterwards removed.

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* A curious circumstance is said to have occurred with regard to some female potters. At the time of Radama's accession, orders had been issued, agreeably to former usages, that during the time of public mourning for his father, no pottery should be made. Seven females, however, were found at work, in disregard of the king's orders. Radama resolved not to put them to death, but sentenced them to work incessantly. And as they chose not

The walls of many of the houses in the capital, and throughout the provinces, are of clay, as are also most of the granaries for their rice, and their native furnaces; but until they were taught by the Missionary artisans, the natives do not appear to have used bricks, either burnt or dried in the sun. Clay, well adapted for making bricks, was found in great abundance in many parts of Ankova; and in the year 1829, Mr. Cameron succeeded in making excellent bricks, which were burnt in a kiln, resembling those in England. The bricks were used in the construction of furnaces for the manufacture of soap, potash, and other valuable purposes, in connexion with the useful arts taught by Mr. Cameron; and there is reason to believe that had Radama's life been prolonged, he would have given all the encouragement in his power to the making and burning of bricks, and that the mud-walled dwellings of the capital would, in a short space of time, have been very generally superseded by the clean, comfortable, and substantial brick-built cottage.

The making of rope and twine is another occupation in which many of the people are occasionally employed. They

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to conform to the tokens of general mourning on the death of his father, he ordered that they should not be allowed to leave off work to mourn for their own parents, nor for the death of any of their relations. When the late king died, they were consequently compelled to work during the ten months of mourning observed by all other classes.

use no wheels for this purpose, but spin or twist the hemp, or other material of which their cordage is made, with the hand. Besides the native hemp, the bark of the hibiscus, and other native plants, and a species of long and tough grass, are used for these purposes by the natives; and their twine and cordage, which they use in the manufacture of fishing-nets and lines, in tying together the framework of their houses, and many of their articles of furniture, are both strong and durable. By the same process as that employed in making their smaller cords, they manufacture the large and strong ropes employed in dragging the immense stones they use in the construction of their tombs, and in conveying their largest timber from the forests to the capital.

Numbers of the people, chiefly women, are also at times employed in making mats, which are used for beds, for covering the floors, or lining the walls of their houses; they are made of rushes, or fine grass, and are woven by the hand, after the manner of the South Sea islanders. Closely associated with this is the making of baskets, which are manufactured of the same materials, and are in very general use among the people. The baskets vary in size, the largest holding rather more than a bushel; in shape, they are usually round or square, and are seldom considered completed until fitted with a cover.

To the occupations already noticed, as recently introduced by the Missionary artisans, may be added the manufacture of leather.

It appears singular that the natives should never have thought of using the skins of their oxen for any other purpose than for making a rude sort of sandal, and covering their drums on the shields. In these instances the skin was used with the hair on, and nearly in the state in which it had been taken from the animal. In 1822, the London Missionary Society sent out a number of artisans to promote the industry and civilization of the people, and among them Mr. Canham went to instruct them in the art of tanning and currying. His proposal was very cordially acceded to by the king; but lime not having been at that time discovered in the interior, his operations were delayed until the year 1825. In 1828, the vats, and other parts of the required apparatus, being complete, the king issued orders that every ox slaughtered at the great festival should be skinned, and the skin, and two feet from each ox, from which oil might be extracted, taken to the tanyards, which were situated at Ambohimandroso. The rump of every ox killed by the people has, from the time they began to feed upon the cattle, been considered as belonging to the ruler or sovereign; one half of the rump the king ordered the people to retain as a compensation for the skins which he now required them to give up; instead of bringing the feet, the people were afterwards directed to boil them, and bring only the oil they contained. Upwards of 16,500 hides were brought on this occasion, and on about half that number the process of tanning was commenced in the month of April, 1829. Bark, suitable for tanning, was found in the forest: great difficulty, however, was experienced in obtaining the required supply; and on the death of Radama, his successor seemed but little disposed to encourage the undertaking. A small quantity of excellent leather was made. The natives are able to tan, not only the hides of the ox, but also the calf, sheep, and dog skins; and should a change in the government take place favourable to industry and civilization, the manufacture of leather would, undoubtedly, form a valuable addition to the productive labour of the people.

The chief occupation of importance that remains to be noticed, is the manufacture of cloth. This is, next to the cultivation of rice, perhaps the most general employment of the people. Woven cloth is made from silk, cotton, hemp, and the leaves of the rofia. A still coarser cloth is made from the bark of a tree by simply beating it out with a wooden mallet, in a manner similar to that in which cloth is made by many of the inhabitants of the Asiatic or Malayan archipelago, and the islands of the South Sea.

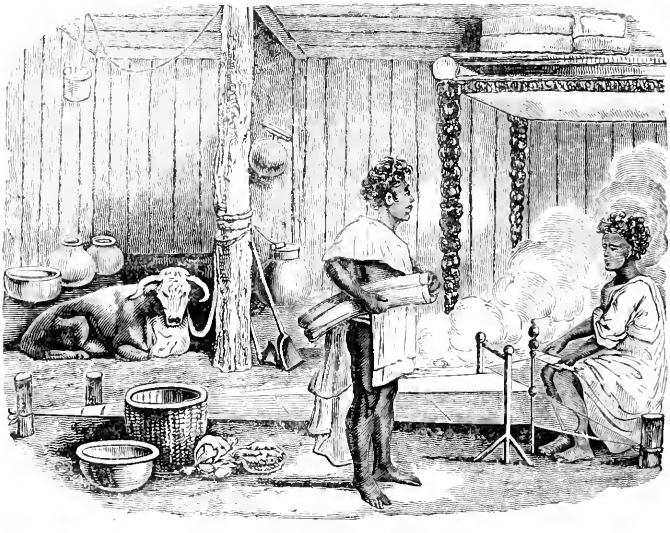
Spinning and weaving are regarded in Madagascar as the appropriate employment of the females, and their manner of performing, appears to a European exceedingly tedious; but time with them is not a matter of much consideration. The materials are cleaned and pulled by the hand, instead of being carded. The only implement employed in spinning yarn or thread is a spindle, which is used in the following manner:—Holding the ampela or spindle in the right hand, and twisting the thread, which is drawn out from a piece of carded cotton, held in the left, they pull out a thread as long as the two hands can be separated. This they wind up around the ampela, and then repeat the operation till the spindle is filled. One woman with the ampela is not able to spin more than a fourth of the quantity that would be produced with a wheel in the same time. Much time is therefore required for spinning a sufficient quantity to make a piece of cloth five yards long. Threads made by slitting the long inner leaves of the rofia resemble those of flax or hemp, but as they seldom exceed three or four feet in length, the natives are accustomed to tie them together, till they are sufficiently long to admit of being woven into cloth. The cloth is always woven in the house in which the family reside, and the loom is generally fixed near the door.

In Ankova, the looms, which are extremely simple, are placed so low in the floor, as to leave scarcely more than four or five inches between the warp and the ground. Treadles are not used in the interior, but on the coast it is common to have both looms and treadles worked with the feet, so as to open the warp after the manner of the Europeans.

When the thread is ready, the Hovas warp it by driving four pieces of wood firmly into the ground, and wind the thread around two of them, and between the other two, according to the pattern laid before them. Having finished this process, they tie together the threads of the several colours which form the pattern, and remove it into the loom, or put it up in a basket, until required. If the warping be for common white cloth, it is easily done; but if it be for diamond or coloured work, great attention is required in counting and changing the different threads.

The Malagasy loom is very simple in its construction, consisting of two strong pieces of wood, rounded on the side over which the threads of the warp are passed. These pieces are called voditenona, or ends of the warp. They are made of the branches of the rofia, and are put through the warp in order to stretch it out at both ends. One of these pieces of wood is passed through the warp at each end, and fastened to posts in the floor. They are drawn nearer together, or removed further apart, by cords tied to posts, two of which are driven firmly into the ground at each end. By this means the weaver can tighten or slacken the warp, drawing up towards her what is done, and bringing the remainder nearer as the progress of the work may require.

The shuttle used by the Malagasy weaver is a piece of round stick, pointed at one end for the purpose of being passed more easily between the threads. The knocker of the weft, called tantanana, is made of wood, and resembles a scythe. The woman employed in weaving puts this between the threads of the warp, in order to open them, and then, after throwing in the shuttle, knocks the threads two or three times before she draws it out; and in this manner, with the assistance of a moving rod in the warp to open the threads, and the pressure of her left hand, the process of weaving is continued.



The small rod placed across the warp, to regulate the width of the cloth, is called tohatenona; besides which, there are other two rods, for the purpose of keeping separate the threads. The weaver also uses a small bodkin, called tofy, for the same purpose. Most of the females in Madagascar are supposed to be able to weave.

In many instances, the garments used by all the members of a family are home-made, being spun and woven by the female members of the same; and when the comparatively rude apparatus and simple process of their spinning and weaving are considered, their attainments in this valuable art are truly astonishing. The threads of their cloth are even and well twisted, the weaving regular, and the patterns in their silk and other variegated cloths remarkably regular, exhibiting great attention, and often no ordinary measure of fancy and good taste.

In 1822, the Missionary Society sent out two artisans to introduce the English wheel and loom; but though the king, and many of the natives, appeared delighted with the operation of both, the endeavour did not succeed; and the death of Mr. Rowlands, the weaver, and the return of his companion to England, left the people still dependent on the spindle and the simple native loom, for the manufacture of the chief part of their ordinary apparel.

A few native dyes are prepared in the country; but the chief part of those used by the people are purchased from European and Arab traders, and used with considerable skill in colouring the silks, cottons, and rofia cloth.

There are many arts and manufactures in use amongst the Malagasy, which seem to belong to the more advanced stage of civilization than is indicated by their moral and intellectual condition. The following ingenious methods of making indigo dye are of this description.

The plant is first gathered, then cut in pieces, and pounded. After which it is allowed to ferment in a damp place until it becomes fetid; and the moisture would consequently be dried up, but that they use a preparation of another plant, called beravina, which is first steeped in hot water until the liquor becomes blue. With this they moisten the fermented indigo once a week for the space of a whole year, by which time, they say, if properly done, it will be excellent. In this state it is called fatobra.

The roots of the banana are also cut and dried, and then burned to ashes. These ashes are pounded with a little of the water used in sprinkling the fatobra; after which, they are formed into cakes, and dried before the fire. The name of this composition is fondrana.

The fatobra and the fondrana are mixed together, and boiled in water for a whole day. The liquor, after it is sufficiently boiled, is put into a vessel, which must be placed near the fire so as to be kept gently warm, and the thread is then put into the liquid dye, where it remains until the colour is sufficiently strong.

There is also another method of preparing indigo dye, by stripping off the leaves from the plant, and pounding them into a soft smooth mass, which is put into a basket, and left in a damp place for three or more weeks, until caterpillars appear in the mass. These caterpillars are allowed to spin for themselves silky-looking coverings of a reddish colour. The basket is then placed in an airy situation, or even in the sun, so as to be well dried; and it may then either be used immediately for dye, or kept for any length of time. The name of fatobra is also given to the dye in this state.

In order to prepare it for imparting the colour, they take of the dried roots of the banana, four parts; of a dried vegetable, called vato-fosa, one part; and of a shrub called tanantanampotsy, about one part, or, at any rate, sufficient to kindle the others, and assist them in burning. These three are then reduced to white clean ashes. Two flat cakes of the fatobra, about eight inches in diameter, and one inch thick, are then put into a vessel, which contains about six gallons of water. A quantity of the ashes, prepared as above, are then added to the cakes, and more water poured on. The vessel is kept in a warm place for three days and nights. A peeled switch, of a kind of wood which takes the colour well, is then used in stirring the liquid for three days more, or until the switch appears tinged with the precise shade of blue that is wanted.

The thread is alternately steeped in the dye for half an hour at a time, and then dried; after which it is steeped again, and this is repeated for the space of from three to six days. By these means a light and a dark blue may be produced, which are both at times exceedingly beautiful.

The manufacturers of the dye do not appear to pay any very minute regard to the preparations of the different materials; those who are accustomed to prepare it, being able to guess at the proper quantity without much difficulty.

The roots of the banana are found to contain a considerable quantity of potash, with the addition of a large proportion of neutral salts. The vato-fosa contains a quantity of very good potash; and the ashes, when the plant is burned, are of a fine white colour. The tanantanampotsy is a soft wooded or spungy shrub, and, when dried, is suitable for burning with the banana.

Amongst the occasional occupations of the Malagasy, that of washing the linen must not pass unnoticed. This is performed by the slaves, and in the following simple but effectual manner. The clothes are taken to a brook, or to the bank of some river, and there washed by being dipped into the water, and then beaten on a large stone with a smooth surface. Soap, if required, is purchased in the markets. After being made thoroughly clean, the clothes are spread out to dry in the sun, and in this manner are beautifully blanched. They are then neatly folded, taken home, and laid in the wardrobe, (a box or basket,) where they remain ready for use.

A description of the occupations of a day in Madagascar may serve to illustrate still more minutely the general habits and manners of the people.

The Malagasy rise early; and in order to do this, it is customary to have a cock roosting in the south-east corner of the house, that he may give warning of the first approach of the morning. He first crows about three o'clock, which is much too early to begin the occupations of the day in a country where there is but little twilight, and where the sun does not rise before six. He repeats his call, however, about five, when, if any doubt should exist as to the actual dawn of day, the master of the house or one of his slaves opens the door, and, after glancing towards the eastern horizon, exclaims, "It is morning." The necessity for doing this, arises from the circumstance of the house having no glass windows, and being therefore entirely dark, except where a ray of light is admitted by an accidental crevice. The door has no other fastening than a piece of stick, about four inches in length, stuck in like a wedge at the bottom, or let into a small groove made for that purpose.

As soon as the family has risen, the master, and other members of the household, squat themselves down beside the fire-place, or outside the building, and stretching out their naked arms, call to a slave to bring them water. A slave then advances, carrying in his left hand an empty pitcher, and in his right a zingia, or bullock's horn, with a stick fixed into it for a handle. This is filled with water, which he pours upon the hands of his master, who rubs them together, and dashes some of the water into his face, while the slave holds the pitcher or wooden bowl beneath. In the same manner the rest of the family are attended upon, the zingia being replenished by dipping it into the siny-be, or large water-jar. The slaves then assist each other to wash in the same way, none using the napkin to wipe off the water, but some rubbing it off with the lamba, and others leaving it to dry in the sun. After this operation, the master dismisses his servants, or accompanies them to their respective occupations.

At home the mistress ordinarily employs herself in arranging her room, and weaving. There are ordinarily a greater number of servants than can be constantly employed where the wants of the people are so few. One of these, perhaps, will remove the pigs or other animals from the corner of the house, by driving them out; another will release the calf from the post to which it is tied within the house; while another milks the cow. These, and other simple employments, with long intervals of squatting on the ground, occupy the slaves until the time of preparing for the first meal. This is not ordinarily taken until eleven or twelve o'clock, and the hour is computed by the length of the shadows on the ground.

Out-door labourers in Madagascar continue at work from the morning till sunset, when, about six or seven in the evening, thousands may be seen returning from the rice-grounds, markets, and distant fields, bearing their spades on their shoulders, and bundles on their backs, sometimes cheered as they pass along by a native bard, who, seated on the ground, will chant his short but lively songs, descriptive of the pleasure of returning home after the toil of the day is over. On reaching their dwelling, another meal is spread, exactly resembling that of the morning; and while this is preparing, as well as after it is dismissed, the family amuse themselves with cheerful conversation. The day often closes with dancing and singing; after which they spread upon the ground their simple bedding, which consists of one or two mats, on which they repose until chanticleer awakes them in the morning.

The occupation in which the people especially delight, is traffic carried on by hawking different things about for sale. Some go down to the coast, and obtain articles of British manufacture from the merchants. Others purchase articles manufactured by their own countrymen, in the hope of realizing some profit by selling them. Perhaps no class of men gain less than these hawkers, certainly none endure greater hardships; yet none are so devoted to their employment, and so unwilling to exchange it for another. The native songs often describe the mpivavotra, hawkers, sitting patiently all day at the market, or travelling from house to house until the sun sets upon their path, yet unwilling to cook a meal of rice until their hearts have been encouraged by obtaining some profit on their goods.

To a corresponding feeling, in all probability, is to be ascribed the excessive fondness of the Malagasy for the public markets; these are the most favourite places of resort for all classes. There is not only a market containing a general assortment of goods, held daily at the capital, but three or four large markets are also held at different distances from Tananarivo and from each other, every day in the week in rotation, in different parts of the province. They are always attended by a vast concourse of people from the adjoining districts, like the great annual fairs held in England.

To these markets all the productions of the country, animal and vegetable, and the various native manufactures and foreign importations, are brought for sale. Here also slaves are publicly bought and sold like cattle, and public kabarys, or messages from the sovereign, are announced.

The situations selected for these markets are usually ample fields of level ground, at no great distance from some principal town, and it is called by the day of the week on which the market is held there. Hence the familiar expression, "You can buy your timber at Thursday"—that is, at the market held on Thursday.

No shops, booths, stalls, or sheds are used in the markets. Every article is spread upon the ground usually on mats. No regular order of squares or rows is observed, and the purchasers must be content to thread their way in all perplexing directions through this labyrinth of commodities and sellers.

The only order is, that persons who have similar articles for sale, usually sit near one another. Some of them have one or two of the articles they sell, fastened to the top of a long pole, which is fixed in the ground near the place on which their goods are spread out. This is used as a kind of sign on the part of the dealers, and serves to guide those who are in search of the articles thus exhibited. Cattle are collected in large numbers for sale at the extremities of the markets, and the butchers usually take their place near them. Then in the body of the market will be found the dealers in spears, spade-handles, and cutlery; next in order, the sellers of cloth, of lambas, of cotton and silk for spinning and weaving; adjoining these, perhaps, the sellers of sugar, tobacco, and snuff, then of honey, salt, and soap, earthenware, wooden bowls, and silver chains, beads, necklaces, silks, and ornaments; then rice, charms, medicines, fruit, poultry; and then money-changers, and the sellers of scales and weights. There are sold also pieces of meat ready cooked, boiled manioc, and draughts of fresh water.

The natives make use of a hollowed block of wood, which they call a vata, for measuring out their rice; and they measure their cloth by stretching out their two hands to the extent of a fathom, or two yards, which measure they call refy. But they have also a rod equal to refy, which is divided into quarters, and even into measurements as small as a finger's breadth.

Oxen are sold in the markets, but horses by private agreement. Goats are not allowed by the idols, any more than pigs, to enter Imerina, but they are numerous in the southern Betsileo, where they are sold and eaten. Radama had some goats brought to his country-seat, called Mahazoarivo; but after his death, they were driven back to their former territory by order of the queen.

Animals are exhibited for sale, but, except on the day of the annual festival, they are seldom seen so fat as in the markets of London. On the day of their mandro, i.e. new year's day, bullocks that have been fattened for twelve months or more, are sometimes seen of so prodigious a weight as scarcely to be able to support themselves.

In making purchases, the Malagasy are adepts in the art of bargaining or disputing. To "miādy vārotra," or, in other words, to dispute the price, seems to be as essentially connected with a purchase, as opening the eyes is with vision. Every one asks for more than he intends to accept, or ever hopes to obtain. All are aware of this, and therefore all contend for an abatement. The seller and the purchaser then generally concede something, until they gradually approximate, and at last agree. An immense length of time is frequently spent in a wordy contest for the value of one penny. Bargains are usually concluded by the parties buying and selling exchanging the salutation, *Soavatsara*, "may it be good and well."

The Malagasy have no circulating medium of their own. Dollars are known more or less throughout the island; but in many of the provinces trade is carried on principally by an exchange of commodities. The Spanish dollar, stamped with the two pillars, bears the highest value. For sums below a dollar, the inconvenient method is resorted to in the interior, of weighing the money in every case. Dollars are cut up into small pieces, and four iron weights are used for the half, quarter, eighth, and twelfth of a dollar. Below that amount, divisions are effected by combinations of the four weights, and also by means of grains of rice, even down so low as one single grain—"vary iray venty," one plump grain, valued at the seven hundred and twentieth part of a dollar.

The following is a table of the moneys thus used:—

No. 1.	Loso	One-half	Dollar.
2.	Kirobo	One-fourth	...
3.	Sikajy	One-eighth	...
4.	Roavoamena	One-twelfth	...

These four are estimated by the single weights, above named; other, and smaller amounts, have their specific denominations as annexed:—

Voamena	Twenty-fourth of a Dollar, made by putting No. 4 wt. against No. 3.
Lasiray	Sixteenth ... Half a sikajy.
Lasi-roa	A lasiray and a voamena.
Lasitelo	A lasiray and a roavoamena.
Venty	Sixth of a dollar, sikajy, and a voamena.
Raimbilanja	Sikajy and a roavoamena.
Sasanangy	Kiroba and ditto.

Small sums are the ilavoamena . . one-half voamena.
eranambatra . one-third ditto.
latsa-pahenina, less by a sixth than a voamena.

And then, as ten rice-grains are counted to one eranambatra, sums under an eranambatra are counted one grain, two grains, &c. up to nine—

That is, 720 grains	one dollar	
360 ...	one-half ...	loso
180 ...	one-fourth ...	kirobo
90 ...	one-eighth ...	sikajy
60 ...	one-twelfth ...	roavoamena
45 ...	one-sixteenth ...	lasiray
30 ...	one-twenty-fourth ...	voamena
10 ...	one-seventy-second ...	eranambatra

The money-changers form a distinct class of traders: they carry on their business in the markets, not by lending money at interest, but exchanging it. If the money-changer gives a whole round dollar for the weight of it in cut money, or pieces of a dollar, the receiver of the whole dollar must give sandamporansa, from one-twenty-fourth to one-eighth of a dollar extra, according to the rate of exchange on that day. When the money-changer buys in whole dollars, he also gives in pieces of money, whatever the rate of exchange may be beyond the weight of the dollar. The rate of exchange varies almost daily, and a whole dollar is sometimes worth, in cut money, one-sixth more than its own weight. It is always highest when the army takes the field, as many who possess cut money wish to exchange it for whole dollars, and at this time the money-changers reap a plentiful harvest.*

Money is nearly the only article weighed in the markets. Most of the goods are sold by measure: rice by means of bushels; meat, by the eye; snuff, by the spoon, or small measure; native lambas, by the length; wood, by its dimensions; fuel, by the bundle; thatching, by number. Gunpowder is sold by the government by weight of dollars. Slaves are sold according to their age, strength, and beauty! In this iniquitous traffic, a good-looking slave, either male or female, always fetches a few dollars more than one not favoured in that respect.

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* The Malagasy generally carry the money they have about their persons, tied up in one corner of their lamba or scarf. The cutting of this corner is deemed one of the capital offences, and is very severely punished.

Prices vary in different parts of the island. Near the coast provisions are dearer than in the interior, in consequence of frequent purchases made by the captains of vessels. At a distance from the coast, all common articles of food may be obtained at low prices. On the average, about a bushel of the best picked white rice may be had for one shilling sterling, and common red rice at about one-third less. Of poultry, ducks and fowls may be purchased at about a dollar for eighteen or twenty; six geese may be had for the same sum; and of turkeys, four or five. A good young horse, fit to ride, cannot be bought under forty or fifty pounds, but there are others as low as twenty. A bullock costs from three to eight dollars. A cow and young calf, three or four. Sheep and pigs are about one shilling, and from that to two, each. In the season, about twenty or thirty good pineapples cost two or three pence; and a peck of grapes, or of bananas, may be had for the same money. There are few other native fruits to be valued in the interior, except limes. The prices of all articles have greatly increased during the last ten years, and especially that of rice.

The value of labour amongst the Malagasy may be judged of by this scale of prices. It is extremely low. Many work merely for their rice and a small quantity of "laoka"—any kind of meat given as a relish with it. If paid in money, about two-pence per diem is the amount commonly given, in addition to the labourer's food. Smiths and carpenters obtain about double the sum. When work is done by hire, it is most frequently by contract. A master will often hire out his slave at the rate of five dollars, rather more than twenty-one shillings sterling per annum, with provisions and clothing.

The natives are in the habit of lending their slaves to assist their neighbours and friends in dragging stones for graves, removing their houses, &c., and they borrow again in their turn. They have thus less occasion to hire labour than would otherwise be requisite. The free people are also in the habit of assisting one another by their personal labours. In all such cases the parties requiring aid find provisions during the time of labour, and then usually give some kind of feast, or distribution of meat, at its termination.

Foreign commerce has long been carried on with Madagascar. Arabs from Muscat have for many years been accustomed to trade with the people of Mojanga on the eastern coast. The Imaum of Muscat formerly maintained a deputy, who governed at this port. Many Arabs frequently brought their merchandise, which generally consisted of raw silk, cloth, earrings, finger-rings, beads, necklaces, precious stones, swords, powder, white cloth, &c. to the capital for sale. The last party of merchants arrived in 1829, before the queen's coronation. The fine river Betsiboka being navigable for canoes from Mojanga to within fifty or sixty miles of the capital, gives great facility for a regular trade between this port and Ankova.

Numbers of the natives of India, chiefly from the Presidency of Bombay, have at different periods visited Mojanga, for the purpose of trade, and have brought their merchandise to the capital, where some have remained to dispose of the goods, while the rest have returned in their ships to India, generally to Bombay or Surat, for a further supply. Those remaining at the capital have usually opened a house for the sale of their goods, and employed the natives to carry their articles through the city and neighbourhood for sale. Though they went to see the Hova markets, yet they confined the sale of their goods to their own houses, or to the natives whom they employed as hucksters. They generally brought silk, Indian shawls, white cloth, beads, precious stones, and necklaces.

Americans have sometimes traded with the inhabitants of Mojanga for hides, beef, and gums, giving in exchange cloth, muskets, powder, swords, hats, clothes, chairs, and cast-iron pots.

In recent years the chief foreign trade has been with Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, England, and America. The proximity of Mauritius to Madagascar favours frequent intercourse, and a considerable trade is carried on between them, excepting during the unhealthy season on the coast of Madagascar. Large numbers of excellent cattle, and occasionally rice and dried fish, are sent from Tamatave, Vohimaro, and other ports, to Mauritius and Bourbon.

The taste and habits of the Malagasy in favour of foreign commerce are increasing; they prefer articles of foreign manufacture to those made in their own country, excepting in those things in which they endeavour to imitate the works of their ancestors, viz., in the production of articles that are purely native, and are esteemed as such. During the reign of Radama, the articles of foreign manufacture in greatest demand, and for which the highest prices were paid, were horses, saddles and bridles, scarlet broad cloth, gold lace of various breadths, red satin, purple, green, and yellow silk, silk handkerchiefs, fine silk in skeins for mixing with their own in weaving the kasena, or green, purple, and red silk velvet, hats and caps; fine calico for shirting, and coloured prints, gloves, sewing-thread and silk, haberdashery and hosiery. Epaulets of gold, earrings, finger-rings, watches, and small musical boxes. Next to these may be named hardware and cutlery; such as penknives, scissors, needles, cast-iron pots or kettles, earthenware, and glass. To these may be added, blue and white Pondicherry cloth, salt, arrac, and rum, introduced among the inhabitants of the provinces near the coast. Large quantities of salt are carried up into Ankova, and sold at a very high price in the markets.

Madagascar is rich in valuable articles of export, but its resources are yet comparatively unknown. During the reign of Radama, the demand for articles of European manufacture increased with astonishing rapidity. Since his death it has declined; and the policy of the present government seems to threaten the entire cessation of all trade with the English. Should a more liberal policy be pursued by the native government, the favourable situation of the island, and the amount of its population, would render its commerce an object of vast importance to the manufacturing and mercantile interests of our country.

CHAP. XIII.

Government of Madagascar—monarchical and military—Extent to which the will of the sovereign is absolute—Instance of personal devotedness to the sovereign—Duties of the sovereign—Importance attached to hereditary rank—Gradations in rank—Members of the royal family—Civil and military officers—The king's household—Native police—Number and dignity of honours connected with the public service—Nature of ancient military tactics and fortifications—Formation of the army after the European model—Military punishment of burning—Employment of singing women during a campaign—Revenue of Madagascar—Enumeration of the sources whence it is derived—Veneration of the natives for the popular traditions and usages supposed to be derived from the practice of their ancestors—Combination of the regal and sacerdotal character in the person of the sovereign—National festivals—The feast of the new year—Description of the ceremonies observed—Benedictions pronounced—Number of the cattle slaughtered at the feast—Modes of administering the oath of allegiance—Animals slaughtered on the occasion—Formation of new laws—Proclamations and edicts—Different modes of punishment: crucifixion, burning alive, flogging to death, fines, banishment, or reduction to slavery—The sovereign's decision final—Operation of native laws on foreigners—National councils—Office and duties of the judges—Public mode of conducting trials—Code of laws promulgated by the present queen in the year 1828.

The government of Madagascar is in theory neither despotic nor monarchical, but a mixture of both, with a preponderance of the former. It might with propriety be termed a modified despotism; there being on one hand too many public assemblies of the people, under the pretended necessity for consultation upon the affairs of the nation, to justify the designation despotic; on the other hand, the sovereign is invested with too much authority, beyond the control of fixed and definite laws, to be considered merely as a monarch agreeably to the definitions of Montesquieu. The sovereign of Madagascar claims nominally a right to do whatever he pleases with the life and property of his subjects, and so far he is a despot. But customs have in some instances the force of law—the will of the people is respected; and so far despotism is modified, and the despot becomes a monarch. This modified kind of supreme authority is applicable, on a limited scale, to the chieftainship of an independent province, and on a broad scale to the sovereignty of the island. For some years past, however, the increasing power of the military officers, and the extent to which the troops have been employed by the sovereign, have rendered the government almost a pure military despotism.

Succession appears to be hereditary in Madagascar, but not necessarily so; and for the simple but sufficient reason assigned by the people, that cases may occur in which the eldest son may not possess talents for governing. The sovereign nominates his successor, he being supposed both to have the right of such nomination, and to be best qualified, by his knowledge of his kingdom and his family, to decide upon the exigencies of the former and the capacities of the latter. His nomination has also all the importance derived from the popular idea that the king can do no wrong, and that, according to his own assertion, as well as the belief of his people, the wisdom of his ancestors, called roambinifolo manjaka, "twelve kings," is united in him.

The sovereign accordingly appoints his immediate successor, and frequently extends his appointment to three or four successors, or fixes the line for future generations. Should he fail of making the appointment, or should unforeseen circumstances prevent the appointments taking effect, the nomination to the succession rests with the nobles, and in this case the decision would most probably rest with the strongest. Unless positive disqualification exist, the eldest son is usually chosen. The rule, however, is not invariable. Andriamasinavalona, Radama's grandfather, divided his kingdom equally between his four sons and a nephew. Radama's father put to death his eldest son for ambitiously aspiring to his father's government while he was still living; and he himself had been chosen to the government in preference to the lineal descendants of his predecessors. It is said that the line of succession by Radama was limited by his father to the issue of a certain marriage, appointed for him by parental authority. By this nominal marriage, he, however, had no issue, and the crown was placed on the head of the nominal widow.

So devotedly attached are the people to the religious observance of such appointments, that a struggle for ascendancy, without its support, could be maintained only by force of arms. Females are not excluded by law from holding the reins of government, though it is not exactly in harmony with the feelings of the Malagasy to admit of female domination.

The power of the monarch is nominally absolute, and to a very considerable extent really so. He is lord of the soil, owner of all property, and master of his subjects. Their time and services are at his command: to refuse either, would be resented not merely with displeasure, but with the loss of life and the confiscation of property. But the genius of the Malagasy, and long-established usage, seem to require at least the show of justice in the proceedings of their sovereign. Accustomed to servility, subjects might submit for a time to the enaction of measures however arbitrary and capricious, but disaffection would necessarily be generated, and rebellion ultimately follow.

It is possible that the long-conflicting claims of hostile chieftains have afforded so many opportunities for the exhibition of loyalty or disaffection on the part of their respective adherents, that a national lesson has been taught, and a national feeling inspired, in which rulers and subjects have equally participated. The sovereign who would hold his kingdom securely, must therefore reign in the affections of his people by the steady administration of justice, and the mild but firm execution of laws which approve themselves to the judgment of the nation as salutary and equitable.

Madagascar is therefore not such a land of degraded slaves, as to render a tyrant inviolably safe. But a paternal monarch is hailed and adored by the people, who were accustomed to call Radama, Andriamanitra, (god.) The Malagasy are not impatient of control. They are sufficiently aware of the value of a regular government, as securing their own safety, to render a willing submission to its restraints. To power blended with beneficence—to authority tempered with mildness—and right enforced by persuasion and reason,—there are perhaps few people, of the same grade in civilization, who could be found more disposed to concede respect, to render submission, or to perform service, than the Malagasy.

As a proof of the veneration with which their sovereign is regarded by the Malagasy, the following circumstance, related by Mr. Cameron, may not be thought unworthy of insertion.

Towards the close of the reign of Andriamasinavalona, when he became sickly and feeble, the sikidy was consulted, with a view to the restoration of his health.

The following result was the consequence of the directions of the oracle. A speech was first delivered to the people, offering great honours and rewards to the family of any individual who would freely offer himself to be sacrificed, in order to the king's recovery. The people shuddered at the idea, and ran away in different directions. One man, however, presented himself for the purpose, and his offer was accepted. The sacrificer girded up his loins, sharpened his knife, and bound the victim. After which, he was laid down with his head towards the east, upon a mat spread for the purpose, according to the custom with animals on such occasions, when the priest appeared, to proceed with all solemnity in slaughtering the victim by cutting his throat. A quantity of red liquid, however, which had been prepared from a native dye, was spilled in the ceremony; and, to the amazement of those who looked on, blood seemed to be flowing all around. The man, as might be supposed, was unhurt; but the king rewarded him and his descendants with the perpetual privilege of exemption from capital punishment for any violation of the laws. The descendants of the man to this day form a particular class, called Tay maty manota, which may be translated, "Not dead, though transgressing." Instances frequently occur, of individuals of this class appropriating bullocks, rice, and other things belonging to the sovereign, as if they were their own, and escaping merely with a reprimand, while a common person would have to suffer death, or be reduced to slavery.

The office of sovereign in Madagascar, though maintained with considerable pomp and barbaric splendour, has no common measure of toils, anxieties, and difficulties. The monarch may consult with whom he pleases; and he is in the habit of assembling his people under the pretext of consulting them, and laying before them plans—from which, however, they never dissent—but the final responsibility of the affairs of government rests with himself. He is the father of his kingdom, and its numerous and diversified officers are under his independent control. He is invested with the legislative and executive authority. All laws emanate from him. The army is raised, and its officers are appointed by him. Peace and war are made by him. All important civil cases are finally decided by him; and death can be inflicted or remitted only by his decree. In some instances he goes out to war in person, and then takes as a right the command of the army.

In right of precedence, the members of the royal family hold of course the next rank to the sovereign. The mother of the reigning prince, if living, usually takes the highest rank next to her son; the king's wife, or the queen, next; and the other wives, according to their seniority; then brothers, and their wives, sisters, children, &c. As the Malagasy are extremely tenacious of the honours due to their rank, great attention is paid to the strict rules of etiquette in all that pertains to precedence.

So many of the prejudices of the Malagasy with regard to rank or precedence, are derived from traditions of their former chieftains, that some mention of them here may not be out of place. The most important amongst the ancestors of the royal family, appears to have been Rabiby, or Ralambo, who is mentioned in all proclamations as the father of the present race of princes in Imerina; and whatever may be the collateral branch from which he descends, the reigning prince of Madagascar must be able to trace his descent to Ralambo. He it is to whom tradition assigns the honour of having first given his preference to that particular part of the bullock which is still, in commemoration of his decision, set apart for the monarch at the great annual festival of the new year. The descendants, both of the eldest and the second sons of Ralambo, seem to have been people of high rank, holding many privileges. The district occupied by those of the eldest son is still called Ambohimalaza, i. e. "the illustrious village." Both these clans or castes have certain privileges, which they maintain with extreme tenacity. They only are allowed to perform the ceremony of burying kings and nobles. Another chief of importance was Andriamasinavalona, king of Tananarivo, who first reduced under his authority the whole province of Imerina. This chieftain had twelve sons. He first instituted the custom of each monarch having twelve wives; and his descendants, who are reputed to be of royal blood to the present day, possess various privileges, amongst the principal of which is the liberty of intermarrying with the royal family.

The nobles, or Andriambaventy, rank next to the members of the royal family. These are also the judges. Their number is not fixed, but usually there are about twelve residing at the capital. Their business is to hear causes, and decide by what appears to them the equity of the case. In important affairs their decision is taken to the sovereign, whose word is final. They are also employed in delivering messages from the sovereign to the people. This duty always devolved on them, prior to the formation of the army upon the European model. After that period, Radama sometimes sent communications through the medium of a military officer of high rank. In this he might have two objects; one, to diminish the authority and importance of the nobles; and the other, to elevate the character and flatter the vanity of his military officers.

Most of the judges possess a menakely (feudal estate) in different parts of Ankova; and the people living on such estates, though free, are not only obliged to work for their feudal lord, but are dependent upon him for his decision as a judge in all cases of dispute between them and their neighbours.

The officers immediately under the judges are the Farantsa, who may be regarded as the civil police of the country. Their duty is to take charge of the money due to the sovereign from fines, taxes, and confiscations; to receive the rice and other productions falling to the sovereign from the land; and, in fact, to undertake the custody of whatever contributions the law requires for the government.

Another class of civil officers consists of the Vadintany. These are employed as the king's couriers. They carry the messages from the government to the head-men of villages, on all public business, and constitute a sort of general watch, as constables of the peace throughout the country.

These messengers, immediately on hearing the proclamation from the king's ministers and judges, hasten with the royal mandate to their respective districts, in each of which a large market is held weekly, one every day of the week in rotation. Where the markets are held, there is usually a mound, on the top of which the Vadintany stands, and fires a gun as a signal for the people to listen to the proclamation of the king. Should there be no market held on the day when these orders are to be made public, the Vadintany delivers his message to the heads of the district, whose duty it then is to make it known to the people. The proclamations sometimes relate to the prohibition of certain articles, such as intoxicating liquors, tobacco, pigs, and the use of silver plates and forks, but frequently to more important affairs.

The only class of civil officers remaining to be noticed, consists of the Ambonin-jato, "over a hundred," or centurion. They are the immediate organs of communication with the people. The judges deliver their orders to the Vadintany, and these convey them to the Ambonin-jato. All directions for attending to public service are conveyed in the same manner.

The Maroserana (military officers) were those heads of districts who had submitted willingly to Radama and his father, and others who had distinguished themselves by their bravery in war, while the king was without disciplined troops. Some of the royal blood were also amongst this class. They were men of greater influence and weight in the court than the judges; most of them possessing larger menakelys (estates), and a greater number of tenants or vassals. They were not only more wealthy, but more expert in war, and exhibited superior taste in the adoption of European dress and customs. Radama was in the habit of conversing frequently with them about the affairs of the kingdom; many were admitted to his table, and he occasionally dined with them; while the judges were never admitted to an equal degree of favour.

The Maroserana had great influence over the people, in carrying any new plan into execution at the request of the king, or in preparing their minds to receive any royal proclamation. From this distinguished body his privy council was formed, and they constituted the principal officers of his undisciplined army. When Mr. Brady, an English sergeant, began to discipline the troops of Radama, in 1816, the maroserana were the first men placed under his care, and were thus qualified to become the chief officers of the army. But the king afterwards becoming jealous of their influence and power, placed them in garrisons in the unhealthy parts of the island, where most of them fell victims to disease, and others being cut off after the decease of Radama, the title of maroserana is now extinct, or merged in that of military officers who have obtained distinguished honour.

The court of the queen is now composed of the andriambaventy, or judges, and the principal officers of the army, called manamboninahitra, or possessors of honour.

During the reign of Radama, the king acted in the capacity of commander-in-chief as well as that of sovereign. No official council of ministers was held under him farther than might serve to maintain the appearance of a public consultation. But he was accustomed occasionally to ask the opinion of his officers separately without explaining to them what he had in view; and after having heard them all, he would decide upon the measures to be adopted. His army consisted of four divisions, according to the four districts of Imerina; and the commander-in-chief, next to the king, resided at the capital, for the purpose of executing the orders of his majesty.

Since the death of Radama, there has been, by the appointment of the queen, a commander-in-chief of all the army; and he, aided by the military staff, has all the responsibility of conducting the wars, of suppressing rebellion and revolt, of appointing garrisons and governors around the coast, and of protecting the country. This commander, therefore, and his military officers, form an important part of the queen's council; while the judges, in their civil capacity, representing the citizens, or bourgeois, constitute the remaining part. It is, however, not unfrequently, that the commander-in-chief, with the officers of his staff, carry into execution plans of their own forming without the knowledge of the queen.

The king's household was composed of male and female servants. Those who were the principal domestics, being free, served him for honour, without pecuniary remuneration. They were assisted by persons from among the Tsiarondahy, a clan of liberated or redeemed slaves of the government. These servants were appointed to different departments in the economy of the palace; some taking charge of the king's jewels, clothes, and private property; some having the preparation and care of the royal wardrobe; while some attended to the king's table, for which others prepared the food. Some of his principal confidential male servants were occasionally employed in conveying orders to the civil and military officers, from whom they also carried back messages to the king. These servants were called the officers of the palace.

The king's body-guard, when he rode out, consisted of about forty or sixty Tsiarondahy, some of whom carried loaded guns, others swords, and others spears. Of these a number walked before him to clear the road, while the rest followed in his train. These, however, were but his ordinary body-guard, while he remained at home. When he went out to war, or appeared in a public assembly on the martial field, the army of the capital, consisting of three thousand men, most of whom were dressed in the British uniform, composed his honourable guard, or Tsimandoa, in addition to that of the Tsiarondahy.

An extensive system of internal police was instituted by Radama, in 1826, combining the civil and military character. The service performed is principally of a civil nature. The rank and title of the officers are strictly military, consisting of corporals, sergeants, captains, colonels, and generals.

Honours are conferred in Madagascar by the *number* of the dignity.* Rank is conferred by number, from one upwards. The first honour is the lowest. The scale ascends thus:—Privates of the line occupy the first rank, and field-marshals the thirteenth or highest. Higher dignities may be created as marks of favour and rewards of service; but at present the arrangement stands thus—

Honour the 1st —Voninahitra voalohany......Privates.
Honour the 2nd—Voninahitra fahaova.........Corporals.
Honour the 3rd—Voninahitra fahatelo ....Serjeant.
Honour the 4th—Voninahitra fahefatra ......Serjeant Major.
Honour the 5th—Voninahitra fahadimy ......Lieutenant.
Honour the 6th—Voninahitra fahenina.........Captain.
Honour the 7th—Voninahitra fahafito ....Major.
Honour the 8th—Voninaoitra fahavalo ....Lieutenant Colonel.
Honour the 9th—Vaninahitra fahasivy ....Colonel.
Honour the 10th—Voninahitra fahafolo ....Colonel folo.
Honour the 11th—Voninahitra faharaikambini folo.... General.
Honour the 12th—Voninahitra faharoambinifolo . Field Marshal.
Honour the 13th—Voninahitrafahatelambinifolo. Field Marshal.

The word "folo," annexed to colonels of the tenth rank, signifies ten, and intimates that those colonels are the highest, and hold an intermediate rank between colonels and generals.

The same names and numbers are applied, as already remarked, to the officers of the civil department; so that a person, who is no soldier, if asked, "What number is your honour?" or, "What degree your voninahitra?" might answer, "The seventh—the ninth," &c., or "I am a captain—a major—or a colonel.' This might seem to create some confusion; but it secures considerable order in the arrangements made for the internal government of the country, and probably supersedes the jealousy and dissatisfaction which might pervade the bosom of many a liege subject of the realm.

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* The word for honour in Malagasy is highly significant, and conveys a moral lesson on its vanity—" Voninahitra, i.e. " *The flower of the grass!*"

Until the year 1816, when Radama availed himself of the services of Mr. Brady in disciplining his troops, the armies led to the field by the princes or chieftains of Madagascar, appear to have been irregular bodies of men, fighting more for the sake of booty than with any union of purpose. Fire-arms were in Imerina during the time of Radama's father; but how much earlier is not known with certainty, and they were too expensive to be in general use. The native weapons originally employed consisted of sticks and stones, shields and spears. With these they were able to defend themselves, and to make their attack on their opponents; and in the absence of the more effective instruments of war, brought to perfection by European civilization, the native weapons were found sufficiently annoying and destructive. The sticks were usually sharp-pointed at one end; their spears were made of native iron, with strong wood hafts or handles. Stones appear to have been principally used by way of defence. Towns being built on eminences, afforded an opportunity to the besieged inhabitants of hurling or rolling down ponderous stones upon the assailants while making their ascent.

A general and valuable means of defence was found also in the hady, or deep ditch, formed around the villages. These exist at the present day; but scarcely any pains were taken by Radama to keep them in repair, partly on account of the tranquillity of Imerina during his reign, and partly on account of the new modes of warfare rendering them of less use as a means of defence. They might keep at some distance thos assailants, who were only armed with sticks and spears, but they afford no defence against the ball from the cannon or the musket.

In the low countries the people have generally sought safety in time of war by flight into their woods, and hence scarcely any hady or moat is found, except in the interior of the island, where there are no forests sufficiently near to be places of refuge in times of war.

Drury gives an account of the residence of a prince, or chieftain of a district, as defended by a sort of natural fortification, which rendered it inaccessible, except to the approach of a very limited number at once. It was situated in a wood, with trees all around it, which seemed to have been planted there when very young, for their growth was regular and tall, and so close together that a small dog could not pass between them. They were likewise armed with large strong thorns, so as to render it impossible to break through or climb over them. There were but two passages, or gates, so narrow as to admit only two men abreast. One of these was to the northward, the other to the south, and the whole was about a mile in circumference.

In going out to war, the people were accustomed to go *en masse*, appointing a place of general rendezvous. Nothing like regular order prevailed in the attack. Every one carried the best weapon with which he could furnish himself; took his slave or slaves to carry his provisions; did the best he could during the conflict; secured as much booty as fell within his grasp, or escaped as fast as he could if his party seemed likely to be defeated.

In the year 1816, during the time Sir Robert Farquhar was governor of Mauritius, a few disciplined troops were sent up to Tananarivo, with a view of exhibiting to Radama a specimen of European discipline, and recommending it to his adoption as one of the best means of giving him a decided superiority over all the other chieftains of the island. The suggestion approved itself to the mind of Radama. He gladly seized the opportunity of securing the services of Mr Brady, one of the party, by whom his own soldiers might be instructed; he afterwards constituted him one of his principal officers, and felt himself greatly indebted to Mr. Brady for the faithful and unremitting services which he rendered.

One regiment only was formed at first, and that consisting entirely of the class of the voromahery. Within a few years afterwards, circumstances led to the formation of an army on a far more extensive scale. The immensely superior power of the disciplined few over the undisciplined multitude, convinced Radama that with an augmented number of regularly instructed troops he should be invincible. They were too few at first to effect his object; but they were enough to produce the conviction that the old mode of war must be exchanged for the new—order taking place of confusion, spears yielding to muskets, sticks to swords, and stones to powder and ball.

The years 1820 and 1821 had proved alarmingly destructive to the Hovas. Incredible numbers had perished in a war against the Sakalavas of Menabé. The waste of human life, for want of better discipline and more specific arrangements, together with the obvious and urgent necessity of keeping more people at home to cultivate the soil, may be regarded as the two principal circumstances which gave rise to the actual formation of the army of Radama. And as it was found that the Sakalavas were tolerably well skilled in the use of the musket, it was seen to be the more necessary to train a body of troops, who might be better able to compete with them, than rude warriors venturing with only spears and shields into the field of terror, devastation, and carnage.

As a proof of the contaminating influence of the martial feeling that was thus created, a youthful regiment was formed, consisting of about one hundred, who learned the military exercises, using bamboos for guns, under the command of Rakotobe, son of Rataffe. Most of these were afterwards taken into the army; but their young leader was cut off a few days after the death of Radama.

This martial feeling appears also to have been cherished and extended, not only by the eloquence of the rulers, but by the songs of the women, who are thus described as celebrating one of their sovereign's warlike expeditions. On the day when Radama was supposed to be entering the territory of the Sakalavas, all the females at and near the capital, of every rank and class, arose by daylight, and having formed themselves into small parties, each under a leader, commenced the "mirary," singing war-songs, in the form of prayers and benedictions, for the safety and success of the king and the army, accompanied with imprecations upon the enemy. They stood with their faces turned towards the west, the direction of the Sakalava country, holding rods in their hands, and brandishing them like spears, with warlike motions, calculated to excite them to enthusiasm. This practice was continued every morning and evening, until the war terminated. It sometimes lasted through the principal part of the day. The expressions consisted chiefly of the praises of the sovereign, such as "God is gone to the west—Radama is a mighty bull"—closing with "Dead is the country to the west—dead is it," the last sentence forming a sort of chorus.

This practice of singing was continued until the year 1824, when the king gave directions, that instead of these warlike exhibitions, the women should go home and attend to their work, and that he should be able to succeed in his wars without their songs.

The revenues of the king of Madagascar are not great, when compared with the amount of property actually contained in the island. The property of the sovereign consists chiefly of slaves and cattle, both which are numerous. These are, however, considered as the property of the government, and belonging to the office, not the person, of the monarch; they consequently descend to his successor. His nominal property as sovereign includes the whole island, since all the land, with the services of the inhabitants, are at his command. The actual revenues arise from several sources, all of them extremely limited, and far below what would be absolutely requisite, if the government were required to pay for the services rendered to it. Instead of this, the government claims the services of the subjects for the army, and various other public duties, and accepts of service also in lieu of payments either in money or produce; by this commutation, rendering the direct taxes of money or produce less necessary than under a better system.

Amongst the sources of the revenue may be enumerated booty, hasina, taxes, duties and customs, fines and confiscations.

By booty, is, of course, understood a share of the spoil taken in war, slaves, cattle, &c. One-third of the whole amount of cattle is allotted to the sovereign, and four dollars on every slave taken captive. The rest is distributed among the officers of the army; and as the sovereign provides arms and ammunition for the troops, his claim to a larger share of the booty obtained is considered fair and equitable. Of the cattle, the sovereign is in the habit of distributing considerable numbers gratuitously at different times, and of selling others to the traders on the coast for exportation.

Hasina, or donations, are presented as acknowledgments of the sovereignty of the monarch, and are made on innumerable occasions. Strangers from all parts of the country, and all foreigners arriving at the capital, present the hasina to the sovereign. In all great kabarys, the hasina is presented by the several districts and different parties in the kingdom, by the judges, the army, the police, heads of clans and villages, and by the scholars and others in their respectively associated capacity. On the king's returning home from a distant excursion, after a war, in passing near a village, or on any event of public importance, as at the fandroana, circumcision, &c.; the hasina is also presented to the sovereign. The sums given on these occasions are usually small, but the aggregate forms a large amount.

A tenth of all the produce of the country belongs to the sovereign, and is called fahafolo, or a tenth. An annual poll-tax also exists, though not universally enforced, amounting to one sikajy for each slave possessed by a free subject. Of goods introduced to the capital, and sold in any way except in the public markets, one-fifth of the profits is claimed by the sovereign; and on every child born to a slave, one-fifth of its value must be paid by the owner into the king's exchequer. There exists also an isantrano, or tax, of one sikajy on each house. Free-will offerings of the first-fruits of the harvest are also made to the sovereign. A certain proportion of rice must also be paid in by the bourgeois for the service of the army. An isampangady (i.e. each spade) is an amount paid from the yearly produce as a kind of rental. On the estates called Menakely, that is, certain portions of land or villages assigned by the sovereign to members of the royal family, to the judges, and others, the isampangady is paid to the holders of the estate. In all other cases it goes to the sovereign.

Duties and customs are imposed on vessels entering the harbours or ports of the island, and on all articles exported and imported. Some attempts have been made by foreign traders to farm these, by paying an annual amount for their own vessels to pass free from all specific duties, and requiring an augmented amount to be laid on other vessels and the commerce of other traders, but the plan does not appear to have succeeded.

A portion of all fines imposed by the judges becomes the property of the king. Of persons sold into slavery for the payment of debts, one-third of the amount of the purchase is paid to the king. The property of all who die in consequence of drinking the tangena is confiscated, and a portion of this also falls by right to the king. The property of persons convicted of defrauding the sovereign, of high treason, or rebellion, is confiscated, and appropriated in the same manner. The king also claims the property of those who die intestate, whose wishes have not been expressed in the presence of competent witnesses, or who die without personal or adopted heirs.

The veneration of the Malagasy for the customs derived from tradition, or any accounts of their ancestors, is one of the most striking features of their national character. This feeling influences both their public and private habits; and upon no individual is it more imperative than upon their monarch, who, absolute as he is in other respects, wants either the will or the power to break through the long-established regulations of a superstitious people.

The king of Madagascar, in addition to his other dignities and responsibilities, is high-priest of the realm. At the commencement of the new year, when a bullock is sacrificed for the good of the kingdom, opposite the tomb at Ambohimanga, the king stands over the sacrifice to offer up the prayers and thanksgivings, while his attendants are employed in the slaughter of the animal. Taking into his hands the sampy (idols), Manjakatsiroa, and Fantaka, he stands on a platform, sometimes in a full kabary of his people; and while he prays, and inquires of the idols, he faces the east. The same ceremony is performed opposite the tomb of Andriamasinavalona, before he goes out into the kabary, and on his return home.

Within the court-yard of the palace, and situated between the two houses appropriated to the national feasts and ceremonies, is a sacred stone, upon which no foot less sacred than the sovereign's is ever permitted to stand. Upon this stone, sacrifices are offered; and here also, on all public occasions, the king alights from his horse or his palanquin, before he steps upon the ground. This object of veneration is not peculiar to the palace. In every village where an idol is kept there is a sacred stone, situated near the court-house.

The most important and popular festival celebrated in Madagascar, is that of the new year, in which the sovereign acts a conspicuous part. The Malagasy year commences with a national feast or lustration, called "mandro," to bathe, or "fandroana," bathing. It receives this designation, because bathing constitutes one principal part of the ceremony; but the whole is not always observed with equal formality. In the early part of Radama's reign, he adhered far more strictly to the ancient national observances than during the last two or three years. The following description of the feast is taken from observations made in 1821.

It is elsewhere remarked, that the Malagasy year consists of twelve months, and an additional day to each month which is supposed to precede the first day of the new moon. The ceremonies commence on the day after the termination of the last month in the year, and are continued through a great part of the night and of the next or new year's day. The design of the feast appears to be simply the celebration of the new year.

For about a week previous to the commencement of the general ceremonies, the sovereign and royal family abstain from all animal food. On the day before the Fandroana, many of the principal people crowd towards the palace-yard with presents for the king as voluntary donations, and as expressions of joy in the anticipation of the new year. These presents consist of fuel, mats, silver, charms, &c. The hasina is always paid in money.

About sunset, on the eve of the new year, the sovereign, who presides as priest during all the ceremonies, having entered the royal house, called Mahitsy, there sacrifices a cock, intimating that the blood of this animal is the last shed in the year, and that with it thanksgivings are offered for the past twelve months, and blessings supplicated for the next. From this place, decorated with a splendid scarlet robe, and accompanied by his guard, the king proceeds to the lapa, or house called Besakana. At this time the whole country is illuminated. Every village, every hut, has its torch or bonfire, which may be seen from the capital to the distance of thirty miles or upwards.

The king having entered Besakana, and taken his seat, the several members of the royal family take theirs also, according to precedence. He then retires to the north-east part of the house, which is partitioned off for the occasion, where he bathes, exclaiming, with laughter and vivacity, that the water is cold. On coming out of the bath, he repeats, Samba, samba, no tratra hariva taona! —"Happy, happy, we have reached the eve of the year." All present then exclaim, Trarantitra!—"Reach a good old age!" At this moment the cannons are fired, and the king, having brought with him from the bath a horn filled with water considered sacred, pours a little into his hand, and sprinkles all present within reach, after which he resumes his seat, all continuing to repeat Trarantitra. He then receives the hasina from members of his family, and from any foreigners who may be present.

During this part of the ceremony, three culinary vessels are brought in, and placed upon a fire arranged and attended by a person appointed to that office. They contain rice and beef; the latter being the portion kept specially from the fandroana of the last year. Some rice and honey are then placed on silver dishes, a portion of the beef on the rice, and the whole is then handed round, that each individual may take a small quantity. In taking it, every one repeats the word samba, "happy," or "blessed," as before, placing also a little rice and honey upon his head, and repeating nearly the same words, Samba, samba Andriamanitra Andriananahary—"Blessed, blessed be the lord god." This custom is called tatao, and signifies perfect concord amongst the parties concerned.

The assembly, after this, breaks up, and the court-yard is deserted by the dense crowd. All then bathe; every parent acting the part of priest for his own household, and performing on a small scale what had just been completed by the king. Weeping for their friends and relations who may have died during the past year, then follows; and the whole country becomes a Ramah, where lamentations and mourning are heard in every house. Heads of families recount also to their households the deeds of former days—

the origin and honours, the exploits and fame, of their ancestors—and thus, by tradition, perpetuate the memory of men and actions which must otherwise pass into oblivion.

The king has one particular bullock for himself and his family, which is killed soon after sunset, just when the old year has expired. The people, however, are not allowed to kill theirs until the following morning. It is a custom strictly adhered to, that the bullocks killed on this occasion should all be good ones; that of the king's, particularly, must be free from all blemish, and of the most perfect symmetry. If it is lame, has any sore, has the end of the tail cut off, has one of its horns turned up and the other down, or if it has a spot on one side without having a similar one on the other, it is deemed wholly unfit for the purpose; for in the view of the natives, this bullock is the representative of all the others, and, before it is killed, is presented or dedicated to god by a prayer which the king offers on the occasion. The person who kills this bullock must also be properly qualified. He must be without any spot or blemish on his body, and both his parents must be living, otherwise he cannot be allowed to make the sacrifice, as it were, in the presence of the deity.

Towards the close of the day previous to the festival, multitudes may have been seen washing their clothes and mats at every pond, or brook, or spring in the neighbourhood; and during the evening, the people bathe themselves and one another. Well would it be, if such a practice prevailed once every week, instead of only once in the year.

About this time several of the king's own bullocks are driven into the court-yard, to be subsequently killed and distributed as jaka, or annual presents, among his attendants. Next morning, by break of day, a great number of cattle belonging to the people are driven into the court-yard. The king makes his appearance at the sacred stone; a coarse block, about twelve or eighteen inches square, planted in the ground, near Besakana. A speckled heifer, previously selected as fit to be offered in sacrifice, is then killed near the stone, and before being perfectly dead, a small piece is cut out of the rump, which the king receives, and with it touches his forehead, the tip of his tongue, and right knee, generally saying, "I have tasted of the blessings of the year. May we continue to enjoy them, and taste of the same at the expiration of this." Part of this sacrifice is then put aside, and kept for the next annual festival; which the Malagasy have a method of preserving perfectly sweet and palatable, although no salt is permitted to be used in keeping it. The animal being next cut up, small fires are kindled before the royal tombs in the court-yard, and small pieces of this sacred beef are fixed on pieces of wood, and put into the fire by the sovereign himself, as a sort of burnt-offering to his departed ancestors.

After this, the king enters the palace, where he changes his apparel, and, again coming out, approaches the tomb of Andriamasinavalona, holding two rods in his hand. He supplicates that chieftain of former times as having "gone to god, and seeing him, and talking with him to intercede with god in his behalf, and to prosper his kingdom, to grant him success in arms, to extend his dominion, and to confer happiness on him and his subjects." He then leaves the capital, and visits Ambohimanga, accompanied by a few attendants. At the tomb of his father he performs similar ceremonies, and supplicates similar favours. This visit is sometimes omitted, but not when there is a prospect of any important military expedition being undertaken.

The cattle having now been driven by their respective owners or their servants out of the court-yard, where it is supposed they received some benefit from the king's sacrifices, prayers, and benedictions, the whole town and country become one vast slaughter-house. Hundreds of animals may be seen driven about through every avenue of the town, with ropes thrown around their horns and entangling their feet, while all hands are employed in the revolting but universal occupation of maiming, hacking, killing, dragging, and dividing. From ten to fifteen thousand bullocks are usually killed on this occasion. Some wealthy families kill ten or twelve; those of the middling classes, three; and amongst the poor, two, three, or four families unite their means, and purchase one for division among themselves. All make an effort at this festival, though they should impoverish their resources for the whole of the coming year. Those who kill the fattest bullocks attain the greatest honours. Some are fed up for the occasion, and cost from seven to seventeen dollars, and in a few instances they are actually kept in the fahitras, and fattened there during a space of three or four years. Of all that are killed in the town, the allotted portion, the rump, is presented to the sovereign; and in the country, the same portion is presented to the chiefs and nobles.

It is usual for the sovereign to distribute a large number of cattle himself, especially if about commencing an expedition. In 1821 the number given by Radama was not less than two thousand. By a general edict the people are forbidden to kill any bullocks for a few days previous to the feast, and for a week or ten days afterwards. During the last years of the king's reign, orders were issued that a smaller number of cattle should be killed lest the country should be too much impoverished.

In the course of the afternoon of the great feast-day, the beef is cut up into small pieces and cooked. It is then placed on rice, and handed round in each family to any friends and acquaintance who may be present. To enter a house on such an occasion without being invited, would be deemed an intrusion; though, having entered, the guest would be invited to partake of the food. This is called eating the jaka. It is usual to give mutual invitations, and to send presents amongst friends from one to another, and in some cases the whole of a bullock is distributed in this manner. Those who have no beef to give, endeavour to send a small piece of cut money as a jaka, or new year's gift, to their friends.

The whole of the first month of the year is called Volompadina, or sacred month, and is not unfrequently occupied by an interchange of visits, to partake of each family's jaka. Friends often travel a very considerable distance on such occasions, to prove their attachment and respect. Radama was in the habit of inviting his family and nobles to eat the jaka with him, and in return he went and partook of theirs. The act of eating the jaka with any one is by the Malagasy considered as a pledge of amity—a sacred test and bond of mutual friendship and concord.

Amongst the most important customs and ceremonies of the Malagasy, connected with the government of the country, is that of taking the oath of allegiance, which is administered to the principal captives taken in war, on being restored to their freedom, with permission to return home, and to persons suspected of disaffection towards the government, or who have risen in rebellion, or excited others to rebel, and yet have subsequently promised to submit and remain faithful. Extermination or slavery is the usual punishment of rebellion; but in some cases, during the reign of Radama, a show of humanity was deemed a preferable line of policy, the consequence is the exercise of a real humanity towards the objects of it.

The oath of allegiance is two-fold. It may be considered either as two distinct oaths, or as separate parts of one ceremony. The names by which the two ceremonies are distinguished, are mivèly rāno and milēfon ōmby,—"to strike the water," and "to spear the calf."

In the mivèly rāno, the judges, and sometimes a party of military officers, accompany the persons to be sworn to the place appropriated to this purpose at the capital. This, however, is no splendid mansion, but simply a shallow stream, gurgling down the hill on the west side of Tananarivo, where an artificial pond is formed for the purpose, called Ranoritra—"water soon to be dried up." Around this the parties stand, holding in their hands branches of the Ambiaty, and a spear procured for the occasion.

The farantsa, civil police, and their assistants, bring to the appointed place the following articles—the dung of a bullock, the efflorescence of a particular kind of grass, a ball, light rice or chaff, the wadding of a musket, branches of the Ambiaty, a long grass, a water flower, a spear, and a musket loaded with one shot. All, except the last two, are thrown into the water, as symbols of the worthless condition to which perjurers will be reduced, or of the means by which they will be destroyed.

A senior judge usually administers the oath, and generally addresses the party in the following words: "If any of you acknowledge, or shall assist in making, any other king than ———, (here the name of the reigning sovereign is specified,) who alone is sacred to be the monarch, and who alone is appointed to be the monarch even to the last generation;—if any of you serve any other than him who is thus consecrated and appointed, let him not see the light, nor find place any more for the sole of his foot, and let universal nature bear testimony against him." The speaker then apostrophises east and west, north and south, all that is hallowed in earth and heaven, and the line of the twelve monarchs, as witnesses of the solemn transaction; and then again turning to, and addressing the party to be sworn, he adds, "If any should rebel, *let him be accursed,* whether all has been named or not, expressly mentioned or not: whoever rebels, let him be accursed! If any of you retract from, or break this oath, lord god destroy him!"

The people express their solemn assent by striking the water with the boughs in their hands, the spear also being struck into the pool, and the musket being fired over it. Thus the ceremony terminates, securing fidelity just so long as the parties find it most convenient and advantageous to themselves to observe it.

In the milēfon-ōmby, or spearing the young bullock, the ceremony corresponds in part with that already described. The anathemas in the oath are similar, the witnesses appealed to the same, and in some particulars the mode of swearing is the same. It is, however, not only used in swearing allegiance to the sovereign by persons suspected of disaffection, but by the different ranks and parties of the kingdom—the judges, the army, the police, heads of districts, &c., on the accession of a new sovereign, or on the announcement of a successor to the reigning king.

The young bullock used on this occasion, is led to the spot where the oath is to be administered, and there killed and dismembered in the same manner as the lamb in the ceremony of the Tangena, the head and tail being cut off, and reversed in their position at each end of the animal, the hind-feet placed where the fore-feet were, and the fore-feet put in the place of the hind, the carcase cut open, and a spear thrust into the bowels.

A number of the heads or chiefs of the parties to be sworn, then take hold of the spear, so many as can conveniently grasp it, and then standing around the animal, thus barbarously mangled, listen while the senior judge pronounces the oath, which includes many terrible curses on all who may perjure themselves. He then summons, as witnesses, heaven and earth, the four cardinal points, the deceased kings, the idols, and the vazimba, the most ancient villages of Imerina, god, and all that is considered sacred; and after a long recapitulation of these, and a tedious multiplication of words, to render the ceremony more imposing, the speaker adds, "If any of you ever retract, if any of you ever refuse allegiance to the sovereign appointed to reign, whether all has been specifically named or not, whether present or absent, great or small, old or young, male or female, newly brought to life or still unborn, whether holding the spear or not holding it, behold this glittering spear! behold this young bullock! and let the perjurer be as this bullock; let him be speared of god; let him not be favoured in any thing, but let him be wholly accursed!"

Those who have taken hold of the spear, then express their assent to the oath, by thrusting the spear repeatedly and violently into the body of the mangled animal, and thus closing the ceremony.

On the death of Radama, allegiance was sworn to the present queen by both these ceremonies, and by the addition of drinking a small quantity of muddy water, which it was supposed would operate upon them as a curse in case of treachery or treason. Those who dared to refuse the oath, were instantly seized, and carried off to be put to death, and the first who opposed her was cut to pieces on the spot; while of those who recognised her, each drank of the water mixed with some earth, taken from the tomb of the father of Radama. This was prepared in a large canoe to the west of the court-yard. None but the heads of districts were sworn by the spearing of the calf; but the drinking of the muddy water was considered sufficient for the common people.

There is no written code of laws in Madagascar; and such a code would be of comparatively little use, since not a single judge can either read or write.* Great regard, however, is paid to traditions, customs, and opinions, from which few are willing to deviate without at least the appearance of strong reason.

When events arise requiring the formation of a new law, or the revival of an old one which has become obsolete, the sovereign announces his intention to the judges and officers, and they convey the intelligence to the people generally at the public markets. Radama occasionally adopted the mode of affixing to the outer gate of his palace a written notification of a new law.

Capital crimes in Madagascar are murder, high treason, sorcery, arson, sacrilege, (robbing tombs,) manufacturing base coin, or acting deceitfully in the king's name, selling slaves out of the island, and stealing money from the person. To these may be added the two military offences, desertion of a military post, and retreating in battle after having commenced the attack.

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* In 1832, a native, called Ramaka, who was converted to Christianity and baptized, became a judge, by the order of succession, to his father. He had been a teacher in the Mission schools, and was qualified to take notes of the evidence in writing. He died about two years afterwards.

The modes of inflicting capital punishments are numerous—some of them such as exist only in the most barbarous states of society. The most honourable execution is that in which a criminal is speared or beheaded in his own house, without being exposed to the gaze of the multitude. The mother of Radama, Prince Ratafy, and others, were put to death in this manner on the accession of the present queen. Persons of the rank of nobles, however, are usually put to death by suffocation. Cattle-folds, where the mire is soft and deep, and, in some cases, soft marshy ground, have been frequently selected for this terrible purpose. In some instances this unenviable destruction has not been observed, and nobles have suffered death by spearing, the common mode of execution inflicted upon ordinary criminals.

In the punishment of death by spearing, the hands of the criminal are usually tied. He is then thrown on the ground, and a spear is driven through his loins. Beheading is another mode of capital punishment. Sometimes the criminal is first put to death by spearing, and his head afterwards dissevered from the body, in order to be affixed to a pole, and exposed to view in some public situation, to terrify the people. The heads of banditti, or other robbers, are sometimes fixed on poles in the villages they have attacked and plundered.

It is the custom in some of the provinces, particularly those on the southern coast, to put the murderer to death in the same manner as he committed the murder, whether by spearing, shooting, or any other means.

In a few cases of great enormity, a sort of crucifixion has been resorted to, and, in addition to this, burning or roasting at a slow fire kept at some distance from the sufferer, has completed the horrors of this miserable death.

It is not fully known by what means the idea of crucifixion as a mode of punishment, was adopted by the Malagasy. It is possible that it may have been derived from the Arabs, or from Scripture history. In the year 1825, a man was condemned to crucifixion who had murdered a female for the sake of stealing her child. He carried the child for sale to the public market, where the infant was recognized, and the murderer detected. He bore his punishment in the most hardened manner, avenging himself, by all the violence he was capable of exercising, upon those who dragged him to the place of execution. Not a single groan escaped him during the period he was nailed to the wood, nor while the cross was fixed upright in the earth. The wooden frame used in the place of a cross, resembles a gallows. To this the malefactor is nailed while it remains flat upon the earth. After which, it is lifted up with its miserable burden, and fixed in two holes made in the ground for the purpose. Here the sufferer is kept until he dies of cold, hunger, or agony. Some criminals, after being nailed to the frame, have remained for hours for the gaze of the multitude. A fire has oftentimes been placed to windward of them, by which they and the cross have been consumed together.

The first criminal who suffered death by crucifixion was a man convicted of having aided in the escape of the queen to her friends, in 1825. Another suffered the same punishment shortly afterwards, for having stolen, or obtained money by false pretences in the name of the king. And three others were in the following year crucified and burnt, for having wilfully set fire to several houses in the capital, and for having, on conviction, avowed their intention of destroying several others in the same manner.

Another method of execution is by tying the malefactor with moist thongs to a post, then rubbing his body with tallow or grease, placing fagots around him, and burning him to ashes. When more than one are to be burnt, irons are fixed upon their hands and feet, and they are laid side by side upon elevated ground, in order that the breeze may facilitate the burning of the fagots by which they are surrounded.

Flogging to death, though rarely practised, is a punishment not unknown. In 1821, three females suffered this terrible fate for having attempted to escape after being made prisoners in war.

Throwing down a steep rock is the usual punishment for making the ody mahery, or practising sorcery.

Burning is the military punishment for desertion or cowardice; and it first became a national law in the following manner. After several thousands of Radama's soldiers had been disciplined to form a regular army, the king convened them on a plain, and asked their opinion as to what punishment should be inflicted upon cowards or runaways in battle. In the warmth of their military fervour, some of the principal proposed burning alive. The proposition was seconded, and supported without a dissentient voice; and the king also adding his sanction, it became a law in the army. Radama used afterwards to say to his soldiers, "It is not myself that punishes you, but your own law." The king, however, was still at liberty to interfere in behalf of the criminal, and might order him, after having been tried and condemned by the court martial, to be shot before he was burned, though the instances are rare in which this mark of royal clemency has been shown. Other crimes in the army are punished by flogging, loading with irons, placing in confinement, or making the culprit run up a hill for a length of time, holding a musket upright in his hand. Degradation to a lower office or rank is also a frequent punishment.

Some years ago an officer, who was high in authority amongst the Malagasy, lost public favour, and became so much disliked by his fellow-officers and others, that he was justly apprehensive of a violent death at their hands. Under these fears, he applied to a diviner to know by what means he should die. The diviner told him he was doomed to a bloody death, upon which the officer inquired whether there was anything that would avert this doom. The diviner still persisted in the same prediction, but advised him to perform the following rite:—To mount upon the back of a bullock, and carry upon his head a small vessel full of blood; while thus mounted, to spill the blood upon the bullock's head, and then to send it away into the wilderness, or a distant and uninhabited place, whence it might never return. The officer faithfully performed the rite, but in a short time was put to death in his own house by order of the queen, while his enemies usurped his place.

Amongst the milder punishments may be enumerated flogging, more or less severely; putting in chains, of two descriptions—long ones, reaching from the neck to the ankles; and short ones, placed on the hands and feet only. Criminals in chains are compelled to hard labour, many of them being employed in the repair of the public roads; and they may frequently be seen assisting themselves in carrying the chain affixed to their bodies with one hand, while with the other they hold a block of stone which is borne upon their heads.

Death was formerly inflicted for almost every offence. But the late Mr. Hastie humanely suggested other punishments instead of death. His recommendation has had the effect of greatly diminishing capital punishments, without augmenting crime.

To be reduced to slavery, is another punishment, sometimes involving a whole family, and with it the confiscation of their property. Pecuniary fines are common, particularly for the trespass of cattle on other ground than that of the owners, and for stealing articles of small value.

Those who borrow money without being able to refund it, or those who incur debts which they are unable to pay, are taken into the public market to be sold for payment of what they owe. A man, his wife, and children, are thus frequently sold together, unless some friend should come forward and become his surety, or pay his debts. Thousands of free people have been reduced to slavery by this means; and this is a law which is generally carried into effect without any mitigation of punishment. If a debtor has property that is seized to pay his debts, and if that be insufficient, he is sold in the market; and if the produce of his sale should still be insufficient to satisfy his creditors, his family must share the same fate. A man who has become surety for another is exposed to similar treatment, if unable to meet the claims substantiated against the person for whom he has become surety.

The punishment of maiming, cutting off hands and feet, has been resorted to in some instances, but is not frequent. Death has generally resulted from such amputations, either by hæmorrhage or mortification.

Nearly all punishments are inflicted publicly, and it is seldom that any delay is allowed after the conviction of the offender. The judges have power to inflict punishments not capital, but death is exclusively in the hands of the sovereign.

When the king has ordered any one for execution, the criminal is delivered into the hands of the populace, who, if he be guilty of any crime generally abhorred, is kicked and pelted with stones and eggs, until he can scarcely be said to be alive on arriving at the place of final execution: in these barbarities the children in Madagascar find great amusement and pleasure.

A custom prevails amongst the Malagasy, that if a criminal can obtain sight of the sovereign, he is pardoned, whether before or after conviction; or if the sovereign should accept a hasina sent to him by the accused. Even criminals at work on the high road, if they can catch sight of the monarch as he passes by, may claim their pardon. Hence, by a sort of anomaly in this singular law, they are ordered to withdraw from the road when the sovereign is known to be coming by.

Exemption from punishment was also claimed by all who had rendered any particular service to the sovereign or the state; and not by such individuals merely, but by their descendants, and by other branches of the family, upon the same plea. During the latter part of the reign of Radama, many unsuccessful endeavours were made by him to abolish the long-continued abuses by which the ends of justice were thus defeated. The following anecdote affords an example of the ingenuity and tact with which he effected this desirable purpose. The favourite servant of a nobleman having committed a theft, engaged his master to intercede for him with the king, and claim the privilege of former service to the state. Radama remonstrated, and, while surrounded by his ministers, kept the nobleman in suspense so long as to give time for his house to be robbed by people whom the king had sent for that purpose; after which Radama desired him to go home, and consider further the petition he had preferred. The chief finding his house robbed, hastened back to the king, and demanded the apprehension and punishment of the thieves. "The criminal," said Radama, "has already presented himself; and pleading former services, I have forgiven him." The nobleman was vehement in his expressions of dissatisfaction; but Radama, showing the absurdity and injustice of the custom, explained the stratagem, and proclaimed that the custom was abolished, and that henceforward he would reward those whose services were deserving of it.

In cases where there is no law, custom, or precedent, the word of the sovereign is sufficient. He can issue orders and proclamations, commute or mitigate punishments according to his own will, without being answerable to any one; for as the popular idea is strenuously maintained, that the king can do no wrong, few are disposed to dispute his authority; and if it should be disputed, woe to the daring offender! It was not uncommon for Radama to give orders for secret executions. He had his confidential servants about him, and his spies in every town. He himself, disguised for the purpose, was accustomed to go about amongst his people in the character of a spy. These proceedings, however, were severely condemned by Mr. Hastie, whose opinion had great weight with the king.

With regard to foreigners, traders are allowed to reside on the coast for any period of time; but are held amenable for offences to the native government. At the capital, where the circumstances of foreigners were different, a regulation was made by Radama, that Europeans guilty of any infraction of his laws should be sent out of the country.

A few cases have occurred during the last twenty years, in which the laws of the country have been put in force against foreigners. In 1821, an artisan from Port Louis, not in connexion with the Missionary Society, was sentenced to imprisonment, and placed in heavy irons. Under this sentence he remained three years in confinement.

In 1822, a trader from Mauritius was convicted of murder. He had deliberately tied up a Creole to a stake, and shot him on suspicion of his having robbed him. The case was referred to the civil authorities of Mauritius, and Radama was informed in reply, that they had decided that the British government could not take cognizance of crimes committed out of the jurisdiction of Great Britain. The murderer was banished to about a hundred miles west of the capital, and in the course of a year afterwards was put to death.

In the spring of 1828, another person from Mauritius was convicted of selling spirituous liquors to the natives, contrary to the law of the land. She was put in irons, and detained in custody some time, but afterwards, on paying a fine, was permitted to remove to the coast.

Foreigners cannot become landholders in Madagascar, as, by a proclamation of Radama in 1825, the natives are strictly forbidden to sell them any land; and but few exceptions to this rule have occurred. This policy appears to have arisen out of some representations made to the king respecting the British power in the East, resulting from the acquisition of land, which, in the first instance, was transferred in very inconsiderable portions.

The greatest national council in Madagascar is an assembly of the people of the capital, and the heads of the provinces, districts, towns, villages, &c. These are held in Andohalo: Radama usually presided in person, taking his place on a platform on an elevated spot situated near the centre. Here he always appeared on his return from war; and in the pretended consultations held with his people upon increasing the army, or other public measures, when from his opinion there was no voice bold enough to dissent.

The next council to this was the assembly of the heads of provinces, districts, and towns only, when the judges and military officers were deputed as the king's commissioners, to make known his will; and the judges carried back to the king the opinion of the assembly, again receiving orders from the king, which they were to make known to those over whom each presided. After the formation of a disciplined army, however, these councils of the nation became less frequent, and are now mere matters of form.

The business of the judges at the capital is to sit in the court-yard, in the open air, on an elevated place near the gate, to hear and to try causes. Military officers sometimes sit with them, to hear the parties and the witnesses examined publicly. There was, till very lately, no established code to which appeals could be made; each case was considered on its own merits. If the case be clear, the judges then deliver their opinion before the people. If otherwise, they retire into one of the royal houses within the court-yard, to consult and to decide on the judgment to be pronounced. But if the case be too difficult for their decision, they lay it before the sovereign, stating to him fully the pleadings of the parties, with the evidence of the witnesses; and his decision is final, whether right or wrong. The parties must abide by the word of the king, and can make no further appeal. The fines and expenses of the trial are divided amongst the king, his wives, and the judges. If any one is condemned to be put in irons, or to be publicly flogged, there is a division of property; but in cases of execution for treason, murder, or any great crime, the property of the criminal is confiscated to the king, who permits the informers, witnesses, and judges to enjoy a share of it. Much, however, depends upon the royal will with regard to the confiscation or division of property, the king being able to alter, increase, or mitigate the sentence according to his pleasure.

It can scarcely be said that any general laws exist; each chief province, or even smaller locality, has its own usages in regard to what are considered crimes, and the nature of the punishments to be inflicted. In awarding fines or punishments, there is generally an endeavour to maintain, at least, the appearance of justice or equity. The laws and regulations established by Radama or his successor, are not supreme in all the provinces, in many of which the ancient usages relating to their internal government remain in force; though the object of the government of the Hovas is evidently to assimilate the laws of the whole island, that all may be governed by one code.

A singular custom prevails, in which, when an offence has been committed and prosecution commenced, the latter is stayed by a promise from the offending party that he will not prosecute under similar circumstances, should the prosecutor commit the same offence against him.

On the final adjudication of a cause, a piece of money is paid to the sovereign and to the judges, as a token of acquiescence in the decision.

As the country is divided into provinces, districts, &c., there is, belonging to each, a principal town or village, in which stands a government-house, called Lapa, and opposite to this house is a sacred stone, by the side of which sacrifices are offered. In each of these towns or villages are appointed ten farantsa, or magistrates, whose office is to govern the district, arrest transgressors, execute the king's orders, take care that the tenth of the produce is gathered in taxes, and to decide in judgment between contending parties. But if they are unable to adjust such differences, the action must be brought before the judges at the capital, and from that court there is no appeal. The farantsa perform nearly the same duties in the country as those at the capital, acting both as magistrates and judges. Under them again are the Loholana, or the heads of the villages in a district.

Causes brought before the judges are such as relate to charges for capital offences, and litigations respecting property, the boundaries of rice-grounds, and cases of bequest. The parties confront each other, and every man is advocate in his own cause, or he may engage his friends to appear, and plead his cause before the judges. Evidence is carefully examined, the witnesses being questioned in the hearing of each other, and the decision is formed on the testimony produced. If the evidence appear equal between the plaintiff and the defendant, or on the part of the accuser and the accused, recourse is usually had to trial by ordeal, or administering the tangena to fowls or dogs, two of which are supposed to represent the two parties opposed to each other: and according to the operation of the poison upon these two substitutes, the case is finally decided.

Such are the imperfect, and in some instances barbarous, laws of Madagascar, adapted to the political exigencies of a partially civilized people, yet at the same time partaking of the inconsistency, superstition, and cruelty which characterize the public and domestic regulations of most heathen nations.

The laws by which the island is at present governed were issued by the present sovereign on ascending the throne. They are entitled "The Laws of the Kingdom, or the Commands of the Sovereign, with the Fines to be imposed on the Malagasy, made at Antananarivo, 27th Alahasaty, 1828. In the original the enactments are regularly numbered. The following is a translation of the chief laws:—

All rebels, or persons who violate the royal bed; who steal from the sovereign's house, or from the houses of any of the nobility; who entice or lead the people to rebel against their sovereign; all persons guilty of murder and witchcraft, shall be punished with death.

All persons found guilty of kidnapping, bullock-stealing, digging under the walls of a house in order to rob it, robbing in a house, cutting off any part of a person's cloth in which money is tied, cutting and stealing rice by night, swearing allegiance to any besides the sovereign, giving the tangena privately in order to decide any cause whatever without the knowledge or consent of the sovereign, removing a landmark or boundary fixed by the sovereign, reviving a lawsuit after it has been once finally settled by the sovereign or judges, the hasina and the orimbato having been accepted, such person or persons shall be lost,* with wife and family; but on surviving the tangena shall receive a fine of ten bullocks and ten dollars from the accuser.

All persons found guilty of a contumacious violation of the laws, being admonished and yet not obeying, shall be fined one hundred dollars.

If any person accuses another of being bewitched, there being no witness, and the accused is conquered by the tangena, whether by drinking it himself or by giving it to the dogs, he shall be lost, and his property confiscated; but if he survives the test, the accuser shall pay him a fine of twenty-nine and a half dollars; no excuse can be admitted in this case.

Any person found guilty of robbing a tomb, or using unjust weights, or untying any part of a person's cloth in which money is tied, or using unjust measures, or making bad money, or the uniting together of four and upwards to bear false witness, striking with iron, or even with wood having iron attached to it, shall be lost, and his property confiscated; but if he gains the cause he shall be paid five bullocks and five dollars by the accuser.

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* Reduced to a state of slavery.

All persons found guilty of concealing the property of those who die childless, or the property of those who die by the tangena, or who consume the property of the sovereign without permission, or receive a bribe from a thief to screen him from justice, or who take the law into their own hands by imposing a fine on another, or who settle the affair of a robbery without informing the sovereign, or who eat the rump of the ox without the permission of the sovereign, or the nobles to whom it belongs, shall each pay a fine of ten bullocks and ten dollars, and an additional sum of thirty dollars to the informer; but if they gain their cause, they shall be paid three bullocks and three dollars.

All persons guilty of stealing in the markets, for whatever they steal (excepting kidnapping, stealing bullocks, cutting off a part of cloth, or untying a part of a cloth in which money is tied) they shall pay a fine of seven bullocks and seven dollars, and twenty dollars to the informer.

If a person seizes another person or his property, and sells or keeps his person or property for debt, without permission of the sovereign or consent of the debtor, he shall forfeit the debt, and pay a fine of five bullocks and five dollars.

And for all small thefts, whether of pigs, or sheep, or goats, or poultry, or money, or rice, or sugarcane, or manioc, or sweet potatoes, or cotton, or Indian corn, or pumkins, or vovo (nets), or bananas, or horirikia, or lemons, or yams, or grapes, or voanjo, or French beans, with all other small thefts whatsoever—the person or persons (being detected by the owners of the property stolen) shall pay a fine of seven bullocks and seven dollars; and if informed against by others, shall pay an additional sum of twenty dollars to the informer, and be put in irons for a week; and if they cannot pay the fine, and their family gives them up, they shall be sold; but if they gain the cause, they shall be paid two bullocks and two dollars by the accuser.

If a tsiarondahy, or a slave, be found guilty of theft, and cannot pay the fine, he shall be sold, (but not his wife and children,) and one third of his price shall belong to the master; if he can pay the fine, it shall be at the same rate as for free people.

If a slave absconds from his master, and commits theft, the master of the said slave shall pay two and a half dollars for catching him; and if only a small theft be committed, the master shall pay half the value of the goods stolen; but if the value of one slave and upwards has been consumed by the runaway slave, the owner of the slave and the owner of the goods stolen shall have an equal share in the runaway slave.

If the slave of a soldier runs away from his master, one-fourth of the two and a half dollars shall be taken off; but if the master of the slave be dissatisfied, the two and a half dollars shall be paid.

If a slave that runs away is worth ten dollars and upwards, the master shall pay two and a half dollars; but if he is under the value of ten dollars, a fourth of his value shall be paid instead of the two and a half dollars to those who apprehended him.

Any person concealing a runaway slave, shall pay one bullock and one dollar for every month's concealment.

If a man informs against his wife, or the wife against her husband, even if they are separated, or a slave informs against his master after he has been sold to another, or even should they employ others to inform against them, their information shall not be admitted.

If a person borrows money and will not repay it at the time fixed, and the owner of the money informs the sovereign of it, the debtor shall pay one-third more in addition to the principal, if the money has not been taken on interest; but if taken on interest, the interest shall be equal to the principal.

If an affair at law has been made known to the proper authorities, and a day appointed for trial of the same, and either of the parties do not appear on that day, not being prevented by illness, the party not appearing shall have his choice whether he will redeem himself by paying the value of his body, or lose the cause.

Any person accusing another of guilt in the name of the sovereign or judges without having authority from them so to do, shall pay a fine of two bullocks and two dollars.

Any person having five houses and upwards destroyed by fire in the town, shall pay three bullocks and three dollars to the sovereign, no excuse can be admitted, and the three bullocks shall be killed for the people in the town.

Whoever inters the corpse of one killed by the tangena with its head to the east, such persons being seen to do so, and being informed against, shall pay a fine of four bullocks and four dollars; but if he begs pardon and confesses his guilt, he shall pay only four dollars.

Any person guilty of stealing fuel, shall pay a fine of one bullock and one dollar. If a large quantity of fuel is stolen, the fine is three bullocks and three dollars.

Any person taking away a canoe without permission of the owner, shall pay a fine of one bullock and one dollar.

Any person who sells to a slave, and the master of the slave is not present, if even the master himself is a slave, and the purchaser has not wherewith to pay, the seller shall lose his money.

If any things lost be found by the people, one-third shall go to the sovereign and the persons who find them.

If any person buys lost property and the owner of the property finds it, he must make the person prove where he got it,—if the property be small that he bought, then it shall be divided between the buyer and the owner; if the latter declines accusing the former as a thief, the person of whom the property was bought shall be sought after, and if he be found, the property shall be divided. But if much property has been bought by him, and he cannot prove from whom he had it, the tangena shall be given.

For bullocks that trespass and destroy the people's property, the owners shall pay one-quarter of a dollar for each bullock, for a pig one-forty-eighth, for a sheep one-seventy-second, for ducks, &c. one hundred and forty-fourth, and hens, &c. may be beaten to death.

And for small thefts also, if the article is eaten on the spot where it was taken, and not carried home, the theft is not punishable.

Any person found guilty of stealing fowls shall receive forty stripes, and have his or her hair cut off.

And for all the above-mentioned crimes, if the persons guilty accuse themselves, one-half of the fines shall be taken off.

All the fines arising from law suits shall be divided between the sovereign and the parties who gain the cause.

For taking person or property by force, or theft, or beating a person, even if the tangena is not given, the fines shall be divided; half shall belong to the sovereign, and the other half to the owner of stolen goods and the informer.

And for other crimes, (not decided by the tangena, theft, taking persons or property by force, beating,) if informed against by people, and the tangena is not given, the money shall be divided into three shares, and two-thirds shall go to the sovereign, and one-third to the informer.

Such are the laws of the kingdom for robbery here-above.* And these are the laws of the kingdom for you† also.

Look well to this paper—those crimes that cause the loss of wife and children here-above, make the loss of person and property there with you.

And all the fines shall be reduced one-half, according to the nature of the fines, if the persons guilty accuse themselves.

And if the convicted parties put in a plea of former services, and establish their plea of having done great good to the country, then a third again is to be remitted from the fines.

Look well to this paper, for the fines are different above from the fines there with you.

And for the capital crimes, as specified in article 1st, (rebellion, violation of the royal bed, robbery in the Lapa, regicide, exciting revolt, murder, witchcraft,)—let the persons guilty of such be brought up to Tananarivo,

Saith RANAVALOMANJAKA.

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* In the province of Ankova.

† The inhabitants of the remote provinces, and on the sea coast.

CHAP. XIV.

Extensive prevalence of superstition among the Malagasy—Their general belief in the power of charms and frequent use of divination—Mythology of the Malagasy—Indefinite ideas of God, of the human soul, and a future state—Defective sense of moral responsibility—Worship of tutelary gods—Imagined sacredness of the villages in which the idols are kept—The idol-keepers—Bearers of the idols in public processions—Origin and appearance of the national and household idols—Homage paid to them by the people—Means used in rendering articles otherwise common objects of superstitious worship—Temples—Sacred stones—Sacrifices—Appeals to idols in the administration of oaths and the ordeals—Names of the principal idols—Their supposed antipathies—Anecdotes illustrative of the deceptive pretences of the keepers of the idols—Exposure of their deceptions by Radama—Public exhibition of the idols—Visit of Radama to the supposed residence of the idols—Import of the names of the idols.

Although the natives of Madagascar have been frequently represented as destitute of any national system of religion, as having no popular idols, or religious observances, towards which they evinced any strong predilection, and might therefore be regarded as a people favourably prepared for the reception of Christianity, being unawed by an interested priesthood, and unprejudiced in favour of any ancient creed, their actual circumstances will be found to differ widely from this flattering, but too hastily formed opinion.

The Malagasy, possessing the feelings and passions which are common to human nature, and being subject to the same hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, as other members of the human family in their destitution of the light and guidance of revelation, have endeavoured, like others similarly circumstanced, to find resources which might satisfy the cravings of the mind, and allay the feverishness of a bewildered imagination, which might arm them with fortitude amidst the apprehensions of mysterious and undefined evils, and inspire them with hope in the prospect of some unknown and equally undefined futurity. The operation of an invisible agency, or of different agencies, they see demonstrated in the phenomena, the order, and the formation of the universe around them. Yet strangers to the sublime idea of a superintending Providence, and almost equally strangers to any rational and philosophical explanation of daily occurring natural phenomena, they promptly attribute every thing to the influence of charms (ody), which their imaginations invent, possessing qualities and virtues adequate to the production of all the varied effects either witnessed or experienced.

Still, while a belief in the efficacy of these potent charms seems to constitute one of the principal articles of their creed, it does not constitute the whole. It forms an important part of the Malagasy system of belief, but it is only a part. It is, in the minds of these credulous people, intimately associated with a conviction of the infallibility of the sikidy, or divination, by which the charm, according to its particular kind or design, in any given case, must be decided. And this again is as closely blended with a belief in some superior power, whose will or fiat is ascertained by the operation of the diviner's art—an art, by which, from premises avowedly laid in chances, a process is worked out by rule, and an indubitable certainty educed as the result. Yet as firmly as the devout believers in the Koran adhere to the paralyzing doctrine of fate, do the Malagasy tenaciously maintain their "vintana"—a stern, unbending, fixed, immutable destiny; and after all they have pleaded for their charms, or sikidy, or god, every thing is summed up with them in one comprehensive ultimatum—"Izany ny vintany"—"Such was his destiny or fate."

Madagascar, it is true, exhibits no outward and visible objects of worship, calculated to charm the senses or claim the veneration of the inhabitants of the country. It recognizes no order of priesthood, and has no classic associations with objects of long-established adoration. But it is not without its idols, its ceremonies, its sacrifices, and its divinations. It has its altars too, its vows, and its forbidden things—forbidden, because hateful to the imaginary genius of the place. It has its mythology, crude as it is, and its guardians of the gods, all impoverished as they are. It has its supplications, deprecations, oaths, and forms of benediction. It has also, as may justly be imagined, its full share of puerile credulity in ghosts, spirits, and apparitions, and in the legendary wonders and feats of giants and other monsters of former days. It makes its appeal by ordeal to some superior power, for preservation from the malevolent though unenviable craft of the sorcerer; and in order that the land may be purged from the evils of witchcraft, it is imbued with the innocent blood of the unfortunately suspected victim—poisoned, speared, strangled, or dashed over the fatal precipice. In a word, the Malagasy are heathen, destitute of the volume of divine truth, and in its absence carefully observing the faith, institutions, and traditions of their ancestors. Vague, absurd, and unsatisfactory as their creed may be, they cling to it with unyielding tenacity. Dark and perplexed as are their minds on the great principles of true religion, they are not without thoughts and feelings on the subject. Their minds are not a blank, upon which truth may at once be inscribed in legible characters, but filled with vain imaginations, erroneous fancies, crude conceptions, superstitious fears, and a pertinacious adherence to the opinions and decisions of their ancestors.

In investigating the religious faith and practice of the Malagasy, a primary question is—do they believe in, or have they any knowledge of, the one true God, the Maker and Preserver of all things? A cursory observation would, probably, induce a favourable answer; for they speak of God, they pray to God, they appeal to God, and they bless in the name of God. But if the inquiry be pursued—if it be ascertained what ideas they attach to the term God, their opinions, if indeed they merit that appellation, will be found so vague, contradictory, and absurd, that the inquirer will be disposed to conclude that the Malagasy have no knowledge of Him who created the heavens and the earth, and who clothes himself with honour and majesty.*

The terms in the native language for God are—Andria-manitra and Zanahary, or Andria-nanahary. The first and last are in most common use in the interior of the island, and Zanahary on the coast. By Andria-manitra is probably meant Prince of heaven, though by the analogy of the language the word would then be Andrian-danitra. Strictly the word seems to be compounded of Andriana, "prince," and manitra, "sweet-scented" or perfumed, which affords no consistent idea as applied to the Supreme Being. Zanahary means he who causes to possess—the source of possession and Andria-nanahary has the same signification, being the same word radically, with andriana, or prince, affixed to it.

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* Radama, king of Madagascar, was a few years ago offered the knighthood of the order of St. Patrick, which he declined, assigning as his reason that he could not take the oath which required him to say that he believed in God, or that he feared God, meaning the God of the Europeans. The king might have his concealed political reasons for this line of conduct, but his objection being founded on the popular faith of his country, illustrates the position that the real belief and opinion of the Malagasy concerning God falls far below what the terms in their language seem at first sight to imply.

If a Malagasy be asked the signification of these terms, he replies that he cannot tell. Ask him if they all mean the same thing, if they are different terms used to convey the same idea, and he answers "Yes," or he will perhaps say that Andria-manitra is the male god, and Zanahary the female. Name to him his idols, and he avows that they are andria-manitra, or, if rather more speculative than the general mass of the people, he will perhaps say, they are sampy, i.e. "helpers," or auxiliaries, all the idols being called sampy, helpers, at the same time that the word may also signify an object by which a solemn oath is taken, in which sense the king may say aza misampy ahy, i.e. "do not swear by me." If, however, a Malagasy be asked with respect to these sampy, whom they do help, the reply is vague and unsatisfactory. They help, andriamanitra—they help the people in going to war, in obtaining blessings, in recovering from diseases, &c. Then again, the genius invoked by the Malagasy in their ordeal of tangena, under the name of manamango, they also denominate and declare to be andriamanitra. The king they also call andriamanitra, and sometimes with the addition of hita maso—"seen by the eye," i.e. the visible god. In short, whatever is great, whatever exceeds the capacity of their understandings, they designate by the one convenient and comprehensive appellation, andriamanitra. Whatever is new and useful and extraordinary, is called god. Silk is considered as god in the highest degree, the superlative adjective being added to the noun—andriamanitra-indrindra. Rice, money, thunder and lightning,* and earthquakes, are all called god. Their ancestors and a deceased sovereign they designate in the same manner. Taratasy, or book, they call god, from its wonderful capacity of speaking by merely looking at it. Velvet is called by the singular epithet—son of god.

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* It is related of Radama, that in a heavy thunder-storm, which occurred one evening, he amused himself with firing some pieces of cannon. The

Many of the people when asked what is God, will reply, a star, the sun, the sky, money, or any thing to which they attach notions of glory or mystery. Others have an obscure notion of God being a spirit, or rather a multitude of spirits, attending upon individual persons, and thus their language very often is—every one has his god; the blind have a blind god, that makes them unable to see; the rich have a rich god, that enriches them; and the prayer offered to an idol consists generally of detached and brief sentences, simply entreating the bestowment of riches, bullocks, rice, health, or other temporal possessions.

It becomes a subject of interesting but almost hopeless inquiry, To whom do the Malagasy pray, and vow, and offer sacrifice? To Andria-manitra, to the Vazimba, and to their ancestors. Who sends the rain? Ramahavaly, one of the principal idols. And who withholds it? We do not know; perhaps god—perhaps the deceased king. But amidst all this confusion, who do the Malagasy believe created them and all things, and who sustains and governs all things? The reply is, Andria-manitra; and to any question beyond this, the honest reply not unfrequently is—We do not know, we don't think about these things.

Still more vague and indefinite are the ideas they entertain respecting the human soul and its future existence.

British agent went to him, and inquired his reasons for doing so. "Oh," said the king, "we are answering one another—both of us are gods. God above is speaking by his thunder and lightning, and I am replying by my powder and cannon." Mr. Hastie pointed out to him the presumption of his conduct; and the king ordered the firing to cease.

They have no knowledge of the doctrine of the soul as a separate, immaterial, immortal principle in man, nor has their language any word to express such an idea. They speak of the saina, but mean by this the intellectual powers. They speak also of the fanahy, the nearest term found to express spirit; but it seems, in their use of it, to imply principally the moral qualities or dispositions. In almost the same breath, a Malagasy will express his belief that when he dies he ceases altogether to exist, dying like the brute, and being conscious no more, and yet confess the fact, that he is in the habit of praying to his ancestors! If asked, were his ancestors not human beings like himself, and did they not cease altogether to exist when they died—how then can it be consistent to pray to them when they have no longer any being, he will answer, True, but there is their matoatoa, their ghost; and this is supposed to be hovering about the tomb when the body is interred. And there is also the ambiroa, or apparition, supposed to announce death, to visit a person when about dying, and to intimate to him, and sometimes to others, his approaching dissolution, an idea by no means peculiar to Madagascar, as it corresponds with the popular superstition of most European countries, that the funeral, or apparition, of a person still living, is permitted to be seen as a supernatural intimation of his approaching death.

The next question is, What becomes of the saina, or mind, when a person dies? To which the Malagasy replies, It is a part of the body. But does it return to dust with the body in the grave? No; the body returns to dust, and the saina becomes levona, i.e. "vanished," invisible. And the aina, or life, becomes rivotra—air, or wind, not retaining its individuality, but absorbed and lost in mere aura—a mere breeze—a breath in the general mass of air floating around. And what becomes of the fanahy? It remains—it exists but only in the associations of memory—a mere idea or recollection, therefore a metaphysical entity. Hence the word comes to signify character; and so far as a man's character and dispositions may be held in the remembrance of survivors, his "fanahy" is said to remain. But this is obviously a very loose application of the term.

It has been said that the Malagasy believe in the existence of four superior divinities or lords, governing respectively the four quarters of the earth. An idea of this kind certainly prevails on some parts of the coast, but in the interior it is regarded as fabulous.

Such being the opinions of the Malagasy concerning God and the human soul, it is obvious that the doctrine of a future state of retribution is unknown amongst them. No conceptions are entertained on the subject of the relations subsisting between the Creator and his creatures; and hence no impressions exist respecting moral responsibility and its specific moral obligations. The exercise of the domestic, social, and civil virtues depend upon the frail basis of the customs of antiquity, and the established usages of the country. These at least serve as their guide and standard while they are enforced by the sanction of the law, and the enactments of the sovereign. Hence it may easily be inferred how egregiously erroneous will be the comparative scale of virtues and vices as drawn by a Malagasy. Chicanery, lying, cheating, and defrauding, are mere trifles compared with the enormous offences of trampling or dancing upon a grave, eating pork in certain districts where it is prohibited, running after an owl or a wild cat, or preparing enchantments.

The weekly computation of time, the ceremony of circumcision, various purifications, and the offering of sacrifices, are almost the only circumstances found among the Malagasy corresponding with those of the Mosaic institutes. No traditional knowledge appears to exist amongst them of any of the great events unfolded to the world by the inspired records, such as the creation, the fall of man, the deluge, the selection of one favoured people, the performance of miracles, or the promise of a Deliverer for the human race. It may be almost superfluous to add, that no ideas, however confused or remote, are found to exist relating to the doctrine of a Mediator, the advent of the Redeemer, the salvation of man, the renewal of the heart, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment to come, or the glory to be revealed.

After this general statement, it may now be appropriate to introduce a more specific account of the objects and modes of worship prevailing in Madagascar.

There are, in the immediate neighbourhood of Tananarivo, twelve or fifteen principal idols, inspiring the religious dread and veneration of the people. These idols belong respectively to different tribes or divisions of the natives, and are supposed to be the guardians and benefactors, or the titular gods, of these particular clans or tribes. Four of these are considered superior to all others, dispensing benefits more widely and effectually, guarding the interests of the sovereign, and the kingdom at large. In other words, these four principal idols are considered public and national. There are, throughout the country, many others belonging to the several clans and districts, and by them considered of greater or less importance. Such, however, are little known beyond their own immediate vicinity. The idols of Imerina, for example, possess no weight nor authority amongst the Sakalavas, nor those of the Sakalavas in Imerina. Every province and every clan has its idol. Every house also, and family, its own object of veneration and confidence, which, in a limited sense, may be regarded as an idol, but is more properly called ody, or "charm," and which seems to correspond with the teraphim of the Old Testament, and the penates of the ancients. Not only does each household contain its ody, but to a great extent each individual has his own; and sometimes one individual has many, and wears them about his person. Crocodile's teeth are worn by many as receptacles of their ody, in which they put their trust, in sickness and health, in life and death.

In passing through Madagascar, the traveller may observe a few villages scattered here and there, which are esteemed by the people, Masina, or sacred: admission to these is prohibited to some tribes of the natives, as well as to many animals and articles of food and merchandise. On inquiring the reason of this distinction, it is discovered that in these villages an idol is kept in some ordinary house without any priesthood or worshippers. The man in whose house the idol is kept, issues its pretended orders, and answers all applications made to it. This man is often assisted by others, and in some instances the whole of the villagers, or clan of a district, are considered as protectors or adherents of the idol. The owner of the idol-house is called mpitahiry, or "keeper," and mpitondra, or "carrier;" the former in relation to his preserving the idol in his house, and the latter to his carrying it forth at public processions. If the clan or villagers accompany the idol in procession, they are called momba, or adherents.

The origin of the national idols, so far as it can be traced, will be specified under their respective names. The whole system appears to have sprung up in comparatively modern times, and long subsequently to the prevalence of the worship of household gods. According to the statement of the Rev. D. Jones, there are old men in Imerina who testify that the most ancient traditions of their country are those proverbial sayings, which in some measure recognise the existence and attributes of the one true God. This supreme Being, according to such traditions, sleeps not, sees all things, avenges wickedness, rewards goodness, governs all, and effects what man endeavours. From this knowledge the worship of household gods is said to have been derived; but while the origin of such worship appears to be unknown, tradition relates that national idolatry was introduced in the following manner:—A king of ancient times observing the influence obtained by masters of families, in consequence of their acting as their own priests, and consecrating their own household gods, adopted the plan of consecrating an idol for the people, calling them his family and children.

Whatever uncertainty there may be in this tradition, it is true that Impoina, the father of Radama, did repeatedly convene the population to witness the consecrating or setting apart of several of the present national idols. Impoina is said to have acted thus solely from political motives, having their foundation in the conviction that some kind of religious or superstitious influence was useful in the government of a nation. It is still acknowledged as a principle, that the idols are under the sovereign's special support. To the sovereign the keepers apply for new velvet in which to fold the idol, for bullocks to sacrifice to it, and for whatever is needed for its protection and state.

It does not appear that the kings who raised the national idols to their present elevation, instituted any mode of public worship; or if they did, the attempt must have failed, for no public worship is offered to them now. Yet they are called god, and in many respects a regard, amounting to idolatry, is paid to them. The following translation from an account of the idols written by a native in the Malagasy language, will illustrate this fact.

"The idols are called god, prayed to, praised, thanked, highly regarded, honoured, and lifted up: they are said to be that which causes to live and causes to die, and are supposed to see the future, the past, and the present, and to be able to cast down the thunderbolts, pour down the hail, to remove disease and inflict curses, and to assemble the snake tribe* against all who calumniate them. It is said also that their calumniators are strangled by them. They are called means of life, and are kept in boxes."

Much superstition is practised by the people towards the idols. If sick, they apply to them for a cure. From them they obtain charms, and to them they look for prognostics of future events, as well as for deliverance from present evil. To them they often pray for earthly good, and their thanks are offered to them for the enjoyments of life. Public assemblies are sometimes convened, when it is pretended that the people are blessed by the idols, or the rice-ground is hallowed, by sprinkling, to preserve the rice from locusts or blight. At such assemblies, also, the people are sometimes enjoined to abstain from certain actions or kinds of food, in order to propitiate the favour of the idol, and thus obtain protection against certain apprehended evils.

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* The snakes or serpents which abound in Madagascar are supposed to be the special agents of the idols, and as such are regarded with superstitious fear by the people.

It is difficult to answer the inquiry of what shape and appearance are the national idols of the Malagasy; because, so far from their being publicly exhibited, it is considered impious to endeavour to obtain a sight of them. The only one of which we have any correct information, was that seen by Mr. Jeffries at Ambohimanga; it was a piece of wood cut into a rough imitation of the human figure. Probably, as the national appear to be derived from the household gods, they may, like them, assume an endless variety of forms. The general opinion of the natives is, that most of them are of the human shape, and vary from half a foot to a foot in length. They cannot be much more, as the cases in which they are kept are generally not more than a foot long. Some are supposed to be mere blocks of no definite shape, and others imitations of animals. Rafanonela is said to be an insect, or to be manufactured in the shape of one, and to be about the size of the silkworm.

But as no strangers are permitted to approach the houses in which these idols are kept, little opportunity is afforded for seeing of what materials they are composed, or what may be their appearance and figure. When carried in public, the idol is usually borne by one person, and seems to be a small image wrapped in a red cloth, and affixed to a pole for the convenience of the bearer, and for the purpose of making a greater impression upon the awe-stricken populace. The people, however, are strictly forbidden to gaze. Curiosity would be an offence. The leader carries a spear at the head of the company, and directs the people to retire out of the public road while the idol is carried by. The cloth of red velvet which covers the idol, is presented by the sovereign, a new one being given occasionally as the old one becomes too shabby for the honour of the divinity. The sovereign also makes an occasional present of bullocks to the keepers, or of money, to enable them to purchase cattle. The pecuniary advantages received by the keeper, however, are not great. His reward is the honour of his office.

When the idol-keeper purposes to sanctify the idol in order to offer prayer to it, or prepare it for the prayers of worshippers, he closes the doors, observes strictly that no one is watching, and then, opening the case, takes out the idol, and pours castor oil upon it, after which he restores it to its proper place.

So difficult is the distinction between real and interested zeal, that it is impossible to ascertain whether these men are themselves the dupes of superstition, or merely the deceivers of others. They are extremely violent in their defence of the idols, and universally profess their own belief in them. The emoluments falling to the share of the idol-keepers are unfixed and fluctuating. In many cases, a dollar is given for advice, promises, or charms. A sheep is often presented, and smaller sums of money, or presents of smaller value, are gladly accepted by the idol-keepers, who are not often affluent, and are sometimes in circumstances of extreme poverty.

In reference to the *dii penates*, or household gods of Madagascar, there is no known traditional account of their origin or history. Most of these idols are literally blocks, without pretension to a human shape: in fact, anything which accident points out, or fancy dictates, or the idol-keepers or diviners fix upon, will make an idol if the owner set it apart or consecrate it as such.

On one occasion, a man was seen with a rough imitation of a bullock wrought in silver, about the size of a walnut, hanging suspended from his wrist. On being asked what it was, he replied, Omby lahy vola, "a bullock of money." And on further inquiry, it appeared that he worshipped it as his god of money. On another occasion, two of the Missionaries were struck with the appearance of a very curious bushy plant, hung up in an old chieftain's house; and while examining it, they were told it was the chieftain's idol, which he worshipped daily.

The office of mpitahiry, or guardian of the national idols, is hereditary, and considered highly honourable. The temple in which they are kept is no more than one of the ordinary houses of the natives, in which the guardian of the idol usually resides. A kiady, or pole with a small knot of straw tied to the top of it, is generally placed near the door, to give notice that entrance is forbidden.

There is not usually any altar connected with the residence of the idol, and hence its temple is not considered in the light of a place destined for worship. Instead of the people going to the idol, the idol is brought to the people. Sacrifices are sometimes offered in the village where an idol is kept, and the sacred stone is used for this purpose. But generally the people offer their sacrifices at the vato vazimba, which are stones considered to be sacred, and erected where the tomb of a vazimba is supposed to have existed. The sacrifices are also offered to the dead, and to the vazimba, more generally than to the idols themselves.

The idols are appealed to in solemn oaths of allegiance, and in the administration of the tangena, or trial by ordeal. They are also at occasional, not fixed, periods carried about publicly to disperse diseases, to fortify the people against the danger of storms and lightnings, and to bestow virtue on springs and fountains. They are also carried to the wars, to inspire their devotees with courage, and to render them invulnerable and victorious.

The names of the principal idols are as follow:

1 Rakēlimalaza [*]
2 Ramāhavāly.
3 Ramanjākatsirōa.
4 Rafāntaka.
5 Ramānjaibōla.
6 Rafarōratra.
7 Ratsimāhavāly.
8 Rabehāza.
9 Ravalōlona.
10 Rafōhitānana.
11 Razānahāritsimāndry.
12 Ralēhifōtsy.
13 Ralēhimalēmalēma.
14 Rātsisīmba.
15 Rālandrēmo.

Of these fifteen, the two most important are the first named: Rakelimalaza and Ramahavaly. These are regarded as having in some way entrusted to them the charge of the welfare, dignity, and interests of the kingdom at large.

The residence of Rakelimalaza is about seven miles to the east of Tananarivo, at a village called Ambohimanambola, or, the village of money. This village is divided into two parts, north and south, and situated on the summit of a hill, which, according to the custom of the country in such cases, frequently assumes the name of the village. The whole of this hill is considered sacred ground. The name of the idol signifies, "renowned, although diminutive."

Within the limits of the ground which is considered sacred, and which embraces a wide circumference in the immediate vicinity of the idol's residence, it is strictly forbidden to bring, or suffer to come, certain animals and certain objects, which are carefully specified by the keepers of the idol. Things thus forbidden are called Fady; a term of similar import with the well-known Tabu of the South Sea Islands. Every idol has its own particular Fady. The things prohibited by Rakelimalaza are, guns, gunpowder, pigs, onions, sifotra (a shell-fish resembling a snail), sitry (a small animal resembling the young crocodile), striped or spotted robes, anything of a black colour, goats, horses, meat distributed at funerals or at the tangena, and cats and owls. Its keepers are forbidden to enter any house where there is a corpse; and in crossing a river they are not permitted to say, "Carry me," otherwise they place themselves in danger of being seized by the crocodiles; and in war they must not talk, or they are in danger of being shot.

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[*] The prefix, I, is sometimes used to the names, instead of Ra—Ikelimalaza, Imahavaly, &c.

As every idol has its own list of prohibited articles, so each idol has its own specific sphere of operation in promoting the welfare of its individual worshippers, or of the nation at large. The benefits conferred by Rakelimalaza are, rendering the sovereign invincible, and universally victorious; preventing the crocodiles from seizing a person when crossing a river; protecting against the mamosavy, sorcerers; and extinguishing fires, by means of his worshippers merely putting their cloth over their heads.

Although not strictly connected with a description of this idol, it may not be out of place to record here an incident which happened some time ago to one of its keepers. A school had been established at the village by the Missionaries, and amongst the scholars was the son of the idol's guardian. The youth having learned that he alone was the true God who had created the heavens and the earth, plainly told his father that that was not God which was taken care of by others, but he who took care of all. The father was very angry, and asked his son if he did not know that Rakelimalaza was god? The boy declined urging the point until another opportunity offered. Meantime he found in his catechism the text, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord;" when he exclaimed, "Now I am both delighted and grieved: delighted to have found the word of the true God--grieved on account of my relatives. They are lovers of idols." He then begged his father's permission to quit the school: "For why," said he, "should I continue to learn what you do not believe." "What do I not believe?" asked the father. "That," replied the youth, "of which I have told you before; and which will not only do me good, but you also. There are new heavens and a new earth for those who believe in God, with everlasting life, and garments shining like the sun, that never wax old."

An impression was made upon the father's mind. He paused—encouraged the youth—and shortly afterwards resolved on relinquishing his charge of the idol. Pretending business at some distance, he therefore asked leave of absence, and remained beyond the stipulated time; for which a fine was imposed upon him, and another person chosen to supersede him in his office. Having obtained information of this, he returned home, paid his fine, and felt himself relieved in being free from his charge of keeping a god which he had learned could neither keep others nor himself.

Next in rank to Rakelimalaza is Ramahavaly; a name which signifies, "capable of replying."* A house is allotted for his occasional residence at the capital; but his home is Ambohitany, a village about two miles distant from

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* This name formed the subject of some addresses to the schools, pointing out the correctness of such an appellation in reference to the true God, and to no other—to Him who is able to answer if worshipped, if obeyed, if consulted, if despised—who is, in the fullest sense of the words, "able to answer."

Ambohimanga. The village itself does not consist of above a hundred houses, built upon a steep hill, and intersected by deep and numerous moats. The idol is kept in a house at the western extremity of the village, which is separated from the other part by a steep hady or fosse. No stranger is suffered to approach this house, lest the virtue of the charms and the powers of the idol should be injured.

With regard to the origin of this idol, it is said, that about ninety or a hundred years ago a person professed to have an excellent charm, by which he could prevent and cure diseases. The chieftain of the district having obtained information of this wonderful charm, sent a person who was ill, in order that its efficacy might be put to the test. According to report, it proved efficacious, and the man recovered. The charm became renowned throughout the district, and in process of time rose to the reputation and dignity of a god, and was designated Mahavaly—"able to answer."

The Fady in prohibited articles of Ramahavaly, like those of Rakelimalaza, are, the meat of animals killed at funerals and at ordeals; or when the guardian enters the residence of the idol, sitting with his feet towards the north-east corner of the house. He also most strictly forbids the killing of serpents.

It would scarcely be expected that a chief and a judge, devoted to idol-worship, would be the strenuous advocate for a school at the idol's village. Such, however, was the fact, in 1824, from whatever motive it originated. Mr. Griffiths was visiting some schools in the neighbourhood, and while passing the foot of the hill was met by the Farantsa of Ambohitany, sent to him by Andriamahary, to urge him to come up and converse with him upon the subject of establishing a school. It being impracticable to remain there at the time, the people ran up the hill to fetch the chieftain part of the way down to meet Mr. Griffiths. In the mean time there came about forty children, already collected towards forming a school, a few of whom had been scholars at Ambohimanga, and repeated what little they had learned. 'Then," said the people, "our children can learn as well those of other villages. Let us have teachers. We are next in rank and in importance to Ambohimanga, and our village is ancient and renowned." In a short time the old judge made his appearance. "Come," said he, "and stay at my house for the night. The sun has set, and it is fifteen miles from Tananarivo. You cannot reach the capital in safety—the pamosavy* will seize you." "We have no fear of the pamosavy," was the reply. "Oh, well," continued the chieftain, "perhaps you white people have some effectual charm to keep them from injuring you." "No," was the reply again; "we have no charm of the kind, but put our trust in the living God." "Then," said the old judge, "if he will not remain with us to-night, go fetch him a present of food; for no man can live without eating. But," he continued, "we must have a school; and it is of no use to hesitate about giving us teachers. We are next to Ambohimanga in every enterprise." He was then asked, "How many children he would promise there should be?" To which he answered, "Fifty." "No," said Mr. Griffiths, "give us a hundred." "Very well," replied the old man, "give us teachers, and there shall be a hundred provided." A school was accordingly established.

The principal benefit conferred by the idol called Ramahavaly, is, to preserve from, or expel, epidemic diseases. He is regarded as the physician of Imerina; and is sometimes carried to the towns and villages, to avert the evil when general sickness is apprehended. A striking instance of faith in this idol occurred in 1826, at Tananarivo. A very extensive, and, in many instances, fatal malady prevailed, both in the capital and in the neighbouring villages. Application was therefore made to Ramahavaly, and he was brought to Tananarivo, where crowds of people collected from all parts of the adjoining country. The guardians of the idol having taken their station, the people, with their shoulders uncovered, advanced in successive bodies of about 300 each, while one of the guardians, acting the part of priest, took a horn filled with honied water, and sprinkled the people as they passed in lines before him. All were grave and serious during the ceremony, after which they retired without noise or talking; a mode of leaving their assemblies widely different from that observed on all other occasions.

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* Bewitched.

During the act of sprinkling the idol, the guardian assured the people of safety from the impending calamity in the following words:—"Take courage—you, your wives, and your children. You have Ramahavaly—take courage for yourselves and your property. He is the preserver of life; and, should diseases invade, he will suddenly arrest them, and prevent them coming near to injure you."

This ceremony is called Miafana; which signifies, "to avert;" and the water sprinkled on the occasion is called Ranonafana—"water of averting." A ceremony of this kind takes place almost every year at the capital.

Great is the renown of the idol Ramahavaly. He is sometimes described as god, sacred, powerful, and almighty; who kills, and makes alive; who heals the sick, and prevents diseases and pestilence; who can cause thunder and lightning to strike their victims, or prevent their fatality;

can cause rain in abundance when wanted, or can withhold it so as to ruin the crops of rice. He is also celebrated for his knowledge of the past and the future, and for his capacity of discovering whatever is hidden or concealed. Should charms be secreted in some clandestine manner, or from any malignant motive be buried in the ground, with a view of injuring people or rendering them bewitched, he is able to find the mysterious spells—to point out the exact spot of ground where they have been concealed—and thus avert the intended mischief.

Some qualities of locomotion are also attributed to Ramahavaly. If disposed to visit any part of the country, he can do it without any one conveying him thither; or, while being carried, he can stop of his own accord, and make his bearer tremble beneath him. In passing ants' holes, it is said by his carriers that he has the remarkable habit of making a pause, quite of his own accord.

The intelligent monarch Radama was fully convinced of the absurdity and falsehood of the pretensions of the idol-keepers; and though he was too shrewd an observer of human nature violently to assail the superstitious prejudices that existed in their favour, he often made them appear exceedingly ridiculous in the eyes of the people, whenever they attempted any of their jugglery in his presence. On one occasion, the keeper of the great national idol suddenly rushed into the court-yard, where the king and many of his chiefs and officers were assembled. He carried a pole, with something wrapped in red velvet, the ordinary symbol of the idol, at the end of it. On entering the palace-yard, he ran about like one frantic; and on being asked by the king why he did so, he said that the idol made him act in a manner which he himself could not avoid. "It is surprising," said the king, "that the god should affect you so powerfully; let me try if it will be the same with me." Upon which the king took the pole and walked gravely round the court without the slightest appearance of any extraordinary emotion. He then turned round to one of the chiefs, and said, "Perhaps I am too heavy for the god to move; do you try, you are light enough." Accordingly, the chief took the pole in his hands, and walked about, but without experiencing any ecstasy; and then returned it to the poor keeper, who slunk off, not a little mortified at the result of the king's experiment. On some of the chiefs who were present, the effect was alike salutary and durable.

The people are taught to believe that should any presume to question the power of Ramahavaly, or dare to sport with his claims, his anger is roused, and he prepares to vindicate himself, by inflicting terrible vengeance upon the presumptuous offender. As an indication of his displeasure, a serpent, it is said, instinctively coils itself around the neck of his guardian, and others around the arms of his attendants. Immense numbers of serpents will also publicly demonstrate the guilt of the offender, by as instinctively seizing upon his person, and strangling him, for having ventured to abuse or insult Rabiby—another epithet for the idol, literally signifying, "beast," or "animal,"—by way of eminence; "the god of beasts." He is said, besides, to possess the power of vindicating his own insulted majesty, by inflicting upon such as contumeliously reject his authority, the very singular punishment, not exactly of twisting their neck, but of giving it that awkward kind of turn that would place the person's face behind, and the back of his head in front; a reverse produced by a spell too potent for any power on earth to undo.

The name of the idol kept at the capital is Ramanjaka-tsi-roa; signifying, "there are not two sovereigns," or, "the king is supreme:" a motto not unworthy of the genius of a despotic government. This idol is kept in the court-yard of the palace; and although strictly the metropolitan idol, he holds no higher than the third rank in point of importance and honour, and, in popular estimation, yields precedence both to Rakelimalaza and Ramahavaly. When the sovereign goes out to a campaign in his own proper person, this idol of the capital is carried with him. At all other times he remains quietly within his own residence, as if to recruit his vigour after the fatigues of a military expedition. His prohibitions are similar to those of other idols, with the addition that no corpse may be conveyed within the precincts of his residence. The specific good which he is supposed to effect, is, the extension of the territories of the sovereign; in fact, the securing of exclusive dominion for the one monarch—the very idea included in his anti-democratical appellation.

There is one other idol, of considerable fame, of which a separate notice may be taken before closing the account of these divinities, namely, Ranakandriana. His residence is reputed to be at Andringitra, a high mountain north-west of Tananarivo, and about thirty miles distant. To him is ascribed the honour of having imparted the knowledge of divination to the Malagasy. He is said, also, to give an audible reply to any who may salute him. There is an echo reverberating from that part of the rock where his altars are erected; and this may easily have given rise to the idea of a response from the mysterious divinity. The altars are similar to those erected to the vazimba; amply saturated with the fat and blood of victims, and surrounded with the horns of bullocks and the heads of sheep and fowls, some of which are affixed to short stakes and poles placed upright in the ground. The divinity is said to reside in a cave not far from the top of the mountain. The principal altar is on the summit; and, of course, higher than the residence of Ranakandriana himself.

The inhabitants of a neighbouring village, on being recently questioned as to whether they had really ever heard any salutations responded to, honestly answered they had not; but warily added, they had been informed that their ancestors had been favoured with responses from the god. They were asked, again, "If what their ancestors had told was true, how was it that no replies were given now when they saluted Ranakandriana?" "Because his awaker is dead," was the reply. "Does he then sleep, since some one is required to awaken him?" "We do not know of ourselves, but so we have been informed." "But is there no one to replace his awaker?" "No; we know of no one else who is able to awaken him."*

His majesty Radama, aware of the reputed fame of this idol for answering those who saluted him, resolved, some years since, to visit his altar, in order to ascertain the truth of the reports. On arriving at the spot, he entered the dark cavern, the supposed residence of Ranakandriana, and saluted the invisible divinity. A low and solemn voice answered, "Tsara hiany." He then offered to present a hasina, or small donation of money; and on a hand being gently moved forward to accept the offering of the monarch, the king instantly seized it, and exclaimed, "This is no god—this is a human being!" He immediately gave orders to his people to drag out the impostor; and thus the spell was broken in the minds of many, and the disbelief of the king in the superstitions of his country confirmed. No imposition of responding to salutations has since been practised, nor has any one assumed the office of awaker.

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* "Cry aloud, for he is a God: peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked." 1 Kings xviii. 27.

The names of many of the idols are singularly significant of the powers and the attributes supposed to belong to them. Among the idols of inferior note, the following may be mentioned:—

Keli-manjaka-lanitra, "Little, but ruling the heavens."—As this god, according to his name, pretends to "rule the heavens," so his exploits are said to be of the following description:—That when the rice is ripe in the fields, and the hail approaching, then he casts (*i.e.* causes to be cast) a charm to the bottom of the water; and fetching ashes from the four corners of the hearth, he throws it towards the clouds, when the hail changes into rain, and the rice is secured. He has many appropriate abstinencies to be enjoined upon his followers, the non-observance of which will frustrate his charms against the hail. Amongst them are—not grinding rice near the place where luggage is deposited; not boiling the root *voanjo* at the fire-place; and such like observances; "*for such things are his antipathies.*"

Manara-mody, "The Restorer to one's home."—The pretended power of this idol is founded on the love the natives have to their native country and village, their families and parents. He professes to furnish a charm, from the application of which, by a third person, the devotee will be sure of reaching that third person again, to whatever dangers he may be exposed. The popularity of this idol is not to be wondered at, when it is considered with how many tears mothers, and fathers, and wives, and kindred, and friends, dismiss the objects of their strongest affections to the distant war, with the probabilities greatly against their ever returning; and with how bitter a grief the soldiers themselves bid farewell to their loved *Imerina*, and all its domestic joys. Any delusion is eagerly seized which promises a restoration to this loved spot.

Manara-mody is, moreover, like many other of the idols, supposed to possess very singular powers. He is supposed to be able to convert a piece of cloth into a snake; and that into a growing plant; and that, again, into other dissimilar things. These metamorphoses are performed by the idol-keeper, whilst the idol is placed above, wrapped in cloth, as if presiding over and performing the wonders.

Rakapila.—Perhaps the name of this idol signifies, "half dishevelled," from his dress or head ornaments. He professes to foresee any blight likely to affect the rice, or any disease impending over the people; and, by appropriate charms, to avert them. For example:—If overwhelming rain and lightning are approaching, he proclaims, "Kill a sheep having red hair, and scatter his bones in the town."

Rakapila is a great seller of charms, as a native tradition declares — "If people desire charms, whatever be the charm, and against whatever evil, they can fetch from Rakapila, for he possesses all; whether a charm against the gun, the spear, or the cannon, he will supply; whether a charm against the fever, the measles, the leprosy, a cold, the dropsy, ulcers, tumours, boils, abscesses, the yaws, &c., he will supply them all. And whether charms against the crocodiles, the locusts, the scorpions, other venomous insects, &c., he will supply. Or if the people seek charms for obtaining their desires, he will supply, whether it be a charm for getting riches, for rendering successful in business, &c., then will Rakapila supply them, for he possesses them, and thence it is that people exalt him."

Randrano-vola, "the silver water," and Randrano-mena, "the red water."—These are kept in a village called Andraisisa, and are famous for several ridiculous abstinences enjoined on the villagers, but of which decency forbids the detail. They also bless the bullocks killed at the annual feast, which are led by the head people to the idols. They have their *fady*, or antipathies, like other idols.

Ramanandroany, "the governor of the *past* part of the day."—It is pretended of this idol, that whoever tramples upon (i.e. *insults*) him, becomes blind, and his knees become swollen. But his principal boast is, to inflict punishment on an unknown thief. An application is made to him after the following manner:—

The owner of the thing stolen takes a remnant of it to the idol, and says, "As to whoever stole our property, O Ramanandroany, kill him by day, destroy him by night, and strangle him; let there be none amongst men like him; let him not be able to increase in riches, not even a farthing, but let him pick up his livelihood as a hen pecks rice-grains; let his eyes be blinded, and his knees swollen, O Mananandroany." It is supposed these curses fall on the thief. Slaves, also, are taken by their masters to this idol, and a curse is pronounced upon them if they should waste their master's property, or run away, &c.

Rafotribe.—The name of this idol is the common appellation of respect given to elderly people. He is said to have been brought from Andringitra, a village considerably east of the capital. From thence he was conveyed to Angavo, a village about thirty-five miles east of Tananarivo. The tradition of his discovery was given by a native as follows:—

"A man, whose son was ill, was seeking a charm or medicine to cure the child; when, at Andavakampo, he saw the son of a nobleman, who said to him, 'Go thou home, put a fence round thy house, and fetch up a bard to sing.'

The man went home, and did so; and while the bard was singing, the son of a nobleman came, bringing Rafotribe, by whom the sick child was cured. Then the man gave money and jewels to the son of the nobleman, but retained the idol himself."

It would be tedious repetition to recount his antipathies and imagined power; which, though differing in particulars, agree, in the general principle, with what has been stated of others. One of his peculiar attributes is to give the power of locomotion to charms; so that when the keeper says to the enchanted thing, "If thou liest not, *dance*," it will dance; and, "If thou liest not, be fixed as a stone or firmly-rooted tree," it will be so. This dancing is applied to the discovery of theft and falsehood, by making him dance if such or such a person in his presence be guilty.

CHAP. XV.

Unfavourable operation of the superstitious opinions of the Malagasy—Restrictions imposed by the idols at particular times and seasons—Different kinds of sacrifices—Localities in which they are offered—Description of the ceremony of sprinkling the people in the presence of the idols—Usages observed in sacrificing an ox—The offering of human sacrifices—The faditra, or means employed to remove diseases and other evils—The afana, or ceremony performed at the tombs as a means of securing repose for the dead—Account of the vazimba, their graves, altars, anecdotes, illustrations of the popular belief respecting them—Influence of fear on the minds of the natives—Ideas of the Malagasy respecting a future state—Reported appearance of the ghost of Radama—General belief in the dominion of supernatural beings—Reported origin of divination—Universal confidence of the people in its decisions—Various modes of working the sikidy—Offering charms—The sorona and faditra—Influence of witchcraft, prognostications, &c.

After the enumeration of the chief idols of the Malagasy, and the description of their supposed characters and qualities, it appears unnecessary to specify farther in detail what are the peculiar attributes of each or any of the idols, which, differing widely in the sphere of influence assigned them, resemble each other in their supposed antipathies and in their prohibitions. All appear to have an aversion to the meat distributed at funerals and the ordeals. Several prohibit onions, some goats and pigs, and some few sheep, while the greatest number prohibit some particular kinds of herbs, fruits, and shell-fish. Most of them forbid their keepers to enter any house in which there may be a corpse, and to sit with their feet towards the east in the house where the idol is kept;—an injunction arising from the circumstance that in such a position they must turn their back towards the idol. It is also forbidden them to eat anything that has been burned in cooking, or that has been cooked in some particular kinds of vessels. In some instances the keepers are forbidden to live in houses thatched with straw. There are cases also in which no houses may be constructed with mud walls within the villages where the idols are kept. This prohibition prevails, however, in some villages where no idols are kept, and the reason assigned is not the interdiction of any divinity, but the "custom of our ancestors."

There are also some prohibitions peculiar to the rainy season. At that time, white rice must not be left on the shelves in the houses, nor may the people amuse themselves with their favourite game of kicking, nor with throwing stones at one another; neither may they burn the rice-chaff in their fires. These, and other similar prohibitions which have force during the rainy season (fahavaratra) are called ody havandra, or charms against the hail; it being supposed, that but for the careful observance of such restrictions, all the rice then growing would be destroyed by the hail.

During the approach of locusts and their destructive attacks upon the crops, there are also some specific prohibitions applied to the case, called ody valala, charms against the locust, such as not wearing any black or brown clothes.

In all cases, the idol's prohibition is determined and ascertained by the decisions of the sikidy or divination.

On public occasions, when a bullock is sacrificed to any particular idol, an animal must he chosen entirely free from any streaks or spots abhorred by the idol; and it must be purchased by some one whose father and mother are living. The flesh of the bullock is then *professedly* divided amongst the multitude, but the chief part of it is appropriated by the idol-keeper.

In many instances, the idols are the direct objects of religious worship amongst individuals. They are not only solemnly appealed to on public occasions, but there are many cases in which people go to them voluntarily, for the purpose of supplicating some favour, and on such occasions they are honoured, praised, and adored, as the benevolent authors of all benefits. A person wishing to obtain some favour, solicits it of the idol, accompanying the request with a present and a vow. The present is offered to the keeper, by whom it is received in the name of the idol, and retained for his own benefit. The object of desire is explained to the keeper, such as money, safety, or victory in war. The keeper repeats the wish or prayer to the idol, and states that such an one promises, if the prayer be granted, to offer an acknowledgment or thanksgiving—it may be a fowl, a sheep, a bullock, or money. If the idol be favourable to the petition, a rapid motion of a wisp of straw is made by the keeper, as a notification that the petition is regarded favourably, and that the object of request will be granted. If there be no motion of the straw, the petition is declined. The promise made of sacrificing to the idol, or offering a thanksgiving when the favour is granted, is called Voady; and this promise, which is in fact a vow, must be fulfilled on the boon being received; such as safe return from war, the birth of a child, or prosperity in trade. To fulfil the vow, is to bring the offering, and is called Manala voady—literally, to fetch away or remove the vow.

The sacrifices and offerings both of the Hovas and Betsimisaraka, are free-will offerings, not compelled by any enactment, but given where and when they please. Each individual sacrifices and makes offerings to the idols, according to his riches or property; either in oxen, sheep, fowls, or money. In Ankova it is the custom to give to the idols only the head, the blood, and the fat; the heads of the sacrifices being fixed on poles: and the blood and fat rubbed on the stones of the altar. The whole carcase is then devoured by the sacrificers and their friends, the priest not forgetting to secure his share of the feast.

There are many occasions on which the idols are publicly exhibited, and supposed to be instrumental in averting national or general evils. The ceremony of sprinkling the people is one of sufficient importance to merit a particular description. On one of these occasions, a few years ago, the assembly consisted of at least six thousand people. They were ordered to squat on the ground in such a way as to admit those bearing the idol to pass to and fro throughout the assembly, and all were especially commanded to sit with their shoulders uncovered. The idol was then carried through the multitude in different directions, followed by a man bearing a horn of honey and water. As they proceeded, the man sprinkled the people on each side of him by shaking his wisp of straw towards them, after it had been dipped in the liquor. A blessing was at the same time pronounced by the bearer of the idol, in words, which, given by a native writer, may be thus translated:—"Cheer up and fear not, for it is I who am the defence of your lives, and I will not let disease approach. Cheer up, therefore, on account of your children and wives, your property, and your own persons, for ye *possess me*."

Of that part of his proclamation which related to the idol's antipathies, the following is a translation:—

"Practise abstinence well—let each of you take good heed to avoid what is prohibited by his idol, whose antipathies are the pig—let him take heed that it have no access to the villages of his abode—the snail, musket, and onions, let them not be borne there; and the goat and the horse, suffer them not to ascend his villages. And in the time of thunder (that is, summer) the children shall not play at kicking each other blue. Ye shall not throw dirt at each other, for these things are his antipathies; so do not these things, but take good heed."

The whole of the idolatrous ceremony connected with the sprinkling, is called mitiofana; but the precise act of sprinkling is called mitiodrano. It is performed on many occasions, such as the spreading of the small-pox, when the harvest is ripening, when a distant war is undertaken, or on the departure of the soldiers from the capital.

An idolatrous procession is thus described by one of the teachers. The object of the procession was to order the removal of certain houses and fences, said to be obnoxious to the idol's displeasure. The idol was Ramahavaly, but acting under the authority of Rakelimalaza. The first man in the procession carried a long pole, about twenty feet in height, at the top of which was the idol or its symbol. Round this, and round the top of the pole, was wrapped scarlet velvet, which hung down like the skirts of a child's doll rather raggedly attired. After this man came another, bearing in his left hand a bullock's horn, containing water mixed with honey, and in his right a small bunch of twigs used in sprinkling. Behind him came fifty very fine athletic men, walking two abreast. Each of these bore in his left hand a bundle of grass containing a serpent, and held his right arm free to seize the serpent, which he brandished about at pleasure. The procession marched with firm and rapid step, and in perfect silence, none being allowed to speak. If any stood in their path, one stepped from the ranks, and advanced towards the obtruder, striking the air violently with his right arm as he approached, until the obstruction was withdrawn. On arriving at any place or house suspected to be the abode of evil or sorcery, it was sprinkled, in order to remove either the power of inflicting evil, or the liability of suffering harm. On arriving at any place supposed to be in danger from lightning, fire, or any other accident, the act of sprinkling was again performed, in order to ward off the apprehended calamity. On reaching a house or fence which the idol required to be removed, a sign was made, by destroying a part, to indicate that such was the intention of the divinity, and the owner was under the necessity of removing the whole.

Mr. Jones relates, that about the end of November, 1818, he witnessed the ceremony of sacrificing a bullock at the beginning of planting of rice.

The animal, which belonged to one of the slave-dealers at Tamatave, was thrown down in a corner of the field, after which his four legs were tied together. The priestess who officiated on the occasion, was called Senegala. She made a long prayer to Zanahary. She then sprinkled the bullock with holy water from a horn, after which the throat was cut by one of the attendants, and it was cut up to be divided in the evening amongst the rice planters, so that all was eaten except the blood. This ceremony being over, all the people commenced planting the rice; but it was not until their work was done, that the flesh of the bullock was divided amongst them, and at the same time they partook of a distribution of arrack. Before this, however, the priestess put some arrack in a cup made of a leaf, and stating that she presented it as a drink-offering, prayed the Angatra to allow the rice to grow. She then placed the leaf-made cup, with the arrack in it, in a safe place in the open field, that the Angatra might drink it for his satisfaction from time to time. As this evaporated in the sun, it diminished day by day. It was consequently believed that the Angatra drank it; and this condescension was joyfully received as a proof that he was pleased, and would allow the rice to grow and prosper. It is a frequent custom with the Betsimisaraka, before they drink spirits, to spill a little on the ground, to propitiate the Angatra, that he may not injure them.

It has been supposed that no human victims were ever slain, but in the province of Vangardrano, human sacrifices were formerly offered. The fact that such sacrifices existed, was not ascertained till lately, nor credited by many till substantiated by repeated and unexceptionable testimonies. It appears that a weekly immolation took place; Friday was the fatal day, and, if possible, chiefs and principal men were obtained, and put to death, as forming a more costly, and hence more acceptable, sacrifice to this Moloch. The offerings were not made to an idol, strictly so called, but the parties were killed before an enormous pole, to the top of which were suspended ody, or charms; and the idea appears to have been that of averting evils and procuring benefits by means of incantation, with which these sacrifices were supposed to have some mysterious and undefinable connexion. The victims were speared on the spot, and devoured by dogs and birds.

In Ankova the religious rites of the people are connected with two ceremonies, called Faditra and Afana. The faditra is anything selected by the sikidy for the purpose of taking away any hurtful evils or diseases that might prove injurious to an individual's happiness, peace, or prosperity. The faditra may be either ashes, cut money, a sheep, a pumpkin, or anything else the sikidy may choose to direct. After the particular article is appointed, the priest counts upon it all the evils that may prove injurious to the person for whom it is made, and which he then charges the faditra to take away for ever. If the faditra be ashes, it is blown, to be carried away by the wind. If it be cut money, it is thrown to the bottom of deep water, or where it can never be found. If it be a sheep, it is carried away to a distance on the shoulders of a man, who runs with all his might, mumbling as he goes, as if in the greatest rage against the faditra, for the evils it is bearing away. If it be a pumpkin, it is carried on the shoulders to a little distance, and there dashed upon the ground with every appearance of fury and indignation.

The faditra of a sheep and pumpkin was witnessed by Mr. Jones, in 1830, when a great number of persons were compelled to drink the tangena, in suspicion of having bewitched the queen, who was then suffering from a slight indisposition.

The Afana is a ceremony performed at the tomb of a person recently buried. It consists of firing muskets or cannons, slaughtering oxen, and feasting. The quantity of gunpowder used, and the number of cattle slaughtered, depend entirely upon the rank and riches of the deceased. The skulls and bones of the oxen are fixed on poles, at the head of the tomb, for a memorial. The natives say that the use of the afana is to take away evil from the dead, that he may rest quietly in his grave. This is their last act of kindness for the departed.

The term Vazimba, of which frequent use has been made, has three several significations. In its strictest sense it appears to designate the aborigines of the interior of Madagascar, from whatever part of the coast they may have come.

The graves of the Vazimba are regarded with equal fear and veneration by the natives. To violate a grave by taking away one of the stones composing the hillock, or to pluck off a twig from the shrubs usually found growing near it, would, in their estimation, be regarded as acts of such flagrant presumption and wickedness as the Vazimba would himself resent by inflicting disease and death upon the unhappy subject of his displeasure. Not only would an intended affront of the kind be thus terribly avenged, but so irascible are these ghosts, that should any one accidentally stumble against their graves, or, by the merest chance, happening in the dark, kick his foot against one of the stones, dreadful is the doom he incurs. In passing a Vazimba altar, the people are accustomed to suppress all levity, and to observe the strictest seriousness of demeanour; and so impressed are the Malagasy with the idea of the Vazimba inflicting diseases, that not only do they expect to suffer after having unfortunately touched their graves, but if enduring any malady for which they are unable to assign any other cause, they are satisfied with this, and conclude that they must, though unconscious of it at the time, have given offence to some Vazimba.

These graves are numerous throughout Imerina. Many are found in the immediate neighbourhood of Tananarivo. They are easily distinguishable from other graves, partly from their being smaller in size, and still more so by the indications they afford of the frequent offering of sacrifice.

In some cases, as at Ampanibe, "the place of abundance of the fany,"* near the capital, the altar is enclosed with a fence constructed of sticks, wattled with the zozoro or rush. The trees growing around give it the appearance of a small natural grove. The altar itself is merely a heap of stones, and one slab fixed perpendicularly in the earth. This is smeared with the burnt fat of sacrifices; and around the altar, and amongst the branches of the trees, are the heads of poultry and sheep, and the horns of bullocks, which at different times have been sacrificed there.

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* Fany, or Fano, a species of mimosa.

The Vazimbas sustain two characters. They are either masina or masiaka, and occasionally they partake of both. When a Vazimba grants the favour requested, he is denominated masina—holy, placable, effective. When, on the other hand, a Vazimba causes disease or death, he is said to be masiaka—fierce, implacable.

This account of the Vazimba may not improperly be closed with a few anecdotes, illustrative of the opinions of the people respecting them.

A few years ago the Missionaries visited the grave at Ampanibe, which is one of the most popular in the neighbourhood of the capital. They were accompanied by some of the scholars, one of whom had been ill a short time before, owing, it was said, to a fright he had received on seeing a terrific Vazimba. To convince the youths of the groundless nature of their fears, and the impossibility of the Vazimba doing them any real injury, the Missionaries cut off a branch from a tree growing near the altar, and took away one of the stones. "Do not touch," exclaimed the terrified scholars, "the Vazimba will certainly be enraged, and you will become ill and die." Two of the youths, however, summoned sufficient courage, and were persuaded to carry the branch and the stone into the town, which they did with many fears and misgivings, under the promise that medicines would be given them if illness should ensue. Their more timid companions endeavoured to check them by saying, "You will assuredly be taken ill—the Vazimba will come in the night, and carry you away to the region of ghosts."

It was by no means improbable that some unfavourable effect should be produced solely from the influence of their excited imaginations; and the slightest illness at that time would have banished all their courage, and confirmed their superstitious fears. Inquiry was therefore made for a few mornings successively, "Have you yet seen the Vazimba?" "No," said they, "we have not; and as we continue well, we are now convinced that all fears of the kind are groundless. The Vazimba has no power to injure us—it is a senseless imagination." "But," said the Missionaries, "what do your parents say to this? Does it not also tend to convince them?" "No," they replied, "our parents say that you white people have some strong and effectual charms, which the Vazimba are not able to resist."

Since that period the scholars have shown but little apprehension of these objects of national superstition, and some have entirely lost the dread of them.

The influence of fear in such cases has been frequently attested by the Malagasy, in the serious illness of which it has been the cause; an instance of this kind occurred some time ago in connexion with the youth mentioned in the foregoing anecdote. Early in the year 1822, being at that time a scholar in the Mission School, he became alarmingly ill. He was seized with the most violent pains, leaped about the room, and endeavoured to strike those near him like one insane, and afterwards he became both deaf and dumb. These attacks were repeated for several days, and always at the same time of the day. The people accounted for them by saying he had been visited by some Vazimba. The youth, on his recovery and returning to school, was asked what had been the matter with him. "A Vazimba," said he, "came to me." And pray what kind of being was the Vazimba? "He was like a human being, but small in stature, with a narrow face, and red as fire—he seized me by the hand," said the boy, "and then I was terrified." The youth became quite well, and, under the influence of better instruction, was one of the two who carried the branch and stone already mentioned, being on that occasion fully convinced of the futility of all the fears he had indulged.

In some cases a superstitious reverence for the Vazimba is confirmed by mere coincidence in circumstances, which the already too credulous native attributes to the supernatural agency which his education has led him to confide in. A person high in rank mentioned an occurrence which took place some time ago in reference to himself. Having been married some time without offspring, his wife and he applied to the sikidy on the subject. By him they were directed to sacrifice to the Vazimba the finest bullock they could obtain, and a son was to be the reward of their obedience. They followed the direction of the divination, offered the sacrifice, and, to their great joy, within a year afterwards, had the happiness of becoming parents.

It may be readily supposed the parents were abundantly confirmed in their faithful attachment to the sikidy, and to the worship of the Vazimba. The son, there is reason to hope, has learned to place his trust on higher objects of confidence, and follow safer guides.

While on a journey some time since, near the high mountain of Andringitra, the Missionaries were informed that on a hill not far distant was a Vazimba of high renown, but extremely fierce. They requested two of the scholars to go and fetch a few of the sacred stones and some branches of the fany, or sacred tree. They complied, but the people, struck with astonishment and horror, warned them of their danger, exclaiming—"Don't be so foolish—so rash. You will die." "If the Vazimba can kill us, let him do so," said the youths, and carried off their prize in triumph. In the course of the evening, having produced their spoils, they asked an old man in the company to carry them to the town, which he most positively refused to do. "Well then," said they, "will you break this branch of the Vazimba tree?" "No," was his reply, "on no account whatever." By dint of persuasion, just to try the extent of his scruples, he was induced to take hold of the branch, but would do no more. No offer of pecuniary reward could tempt him to risk carrying it into the town; "and now," said he, "having touched it, I must bathe myself before going to rest." "But why are you so afraid of it?" he was asked. "Because the Vazimba would visit me, and cause my illness and death." "Why then were not those effects produced upon the scholars, who did the same act some time ago?" "Oh, they learn the book, and they believe what you teach them." "Then why should not you believe us? We tell you the same thing *out* of the book as we tell them *in* the book." The poor man could only reply, "Why, after all, should you wish me to abandon the customs of my ancestors and of my country?" "Because," said they, "we wish you to forsake what is erroneous and groundless, and to become wise and happy." "Oh, no," said he, "if I should do this, I should certainly become ill and die. I dare not affront the Vazimba, or my death will be the inevitable consequence."

This was the burden of his fears, the ground of his argument, and he remained, as do many others, under the influence of the superstitious fears that rendered his life one of constant alarm.

It has been stated by many writers that the Malagasy have no idea whatever of a future state, and that their language possesses no word to express that of soul or spirit. But this opinion admits of some modification, as the total absence of all idea of an existence after death is scarcely consistent with their well-known belief in ghosts. Even their mode of burying the dead seems to indicate something like an idea that some portion of the departed, either material or spiritual, will be able to possess and take pleasure in the same things which afforded satisfaction in life. It is customary to cast into the tomb or vault in which the dead are buried, garments, ornaments, looking-glasses, and any thing that was precious or useful to them when living. The funeral of the late king Radama was celebrated by a greater sacrifice of this kind than was ever known to have taken place in the country at any other time. It is stated by Mr. Jones, that on the death of one of his scholars, who was the son of a noble, and who, in addition to his being a superior and talented youth, had excited higher hopes in the minds of his Christian teachers; on being laid in his tomb, or vault, his mother and relatives ordered all his books, slates, and papers to be buried with him. After which, they requested Mr. Jones to deliver an address according to the European mode of burying.

If asked their reason for continuing this practice, the Malagasy reply, that these things are buried with the dead, in the hope that they may be useful to them again, though in what way they are unable to explain. They have, however, no scruple in avowing their belief in ghosts, which, they say, are in the habit of walking about at night. The Hovas call the ghost or apparition of a living person, ombiroa; and that of a dead person, matoatoa. They say that the matoatoa of both men and beasts reside in a great mountain in the south, called Ambondrombe, but that they come out occasionally to walk amongst the tombs, or golgothas, where criminals are executed.

After the death of Radama, it was reported and believed that he was seen one night in the garden before his country-seat, called Mahazoarivo. He was dressed in one of the uniforms buried with him in his silver coffin, and riding on one of the best horses, killed opposite his tomb. The keepers of the royal country palace, seeing him thus mounted, were so terrified, that they ran away, as if for their lives, and informed the queen of it. Her majesty consequently sent old Andriamamba, one of her principal ministers, and some of the priests, with the idols and sikidy, to sacrifice a bullock, and to ask Radama why he came there to disturb them. Had they not buried property enough with him in his tomb?—was it not that he of his own accord turned his back upon them, and not they who drove him away? After the sacrifice, the ghost of the deceased monarch never came back to disturb the peace of his realm.

This story was related to Mr. Jones by one who witnessed the ceremony, and also by others who firmly believed in the appearance of the ghost of Radama on horseback, in the garden-grounds already mentioned.

Such then are the obscure notions entertained by the Malagasy in reference to a future state. Such are the strong prejudices that must be combated, and gross superstitions, that, with but a few slight exceptions, remain to be overthrown by the introduction of more enlightened views, and the substitution of higher objects of belief.

From what has already been said of the mythology of Madagascar, and of the importance attached by the natives to the customs and traditions of their ancestors, an imaginative and reverential tendency of mind might be attributed to them, almost equal to that which classic history records of the more refined and civilized idolaters of ancient times. But the judgment is startled, on proceeding through the examination of their superstitions, to find that, with all their veneration for antiquity, their belief in traditionary lore, and their minute and somewhat metaphysical distinctions of the character and attributes of the supernatural agencies by which they believe their lives to be governed, they are still in the habit of referring every doubt and every difficulty to the decision of a table of divination, which can be worked out like a game of chess; and hence their actions and impressions, though irrevocably fixed by this decision, must again be mentally referred to another agency, capable, as already observed, of being described by no other appellation than that of *fate*.

The origin of the term *sikidy* is not known. It is a word used by the Malagasy to denote a certain kind of divination to which they are devotedly attached, and by which they obtain decisions relating to all the most important acts of their lives, whether public or private. It is neither astrology nor necromancy. It consists neither of the flight of birds, the inspection of the entrails of sacrificed animals, nor in the interpretation of dreams. It partakes neither of the nature of magic, legerdemain, nor incantation. But its nature is oracular, and it directs to the use of charms and incantations. It is the mode of working a particular process by means of beans, rice, straw, sand, or any other object that can be easily counted or divided. Definite and invariable rules are given for working the process and deciding upon the results. Decisions are formed in the cases under inquiry by a comparison between one and another line of numbers which are produced by the process of working. Names are appropriated to all the different positions which the numbers, or lines of numbers, form; and definite rules given for the comparison of any two of these names; in other cases, of three; and in some so high as four.

There are also other modes of working the sikidy; but this is the most popular process, and in general use amongst the Malagasy. Farther illustrations of the mode of working the sikidy will be introduced, after a few additional or explanatory remarks have been given.

It is the universal belief amongst the Malagasy, that the knowledge of the art of divination was supernaturally communicated to their ancestors. They have a tradition that God gave it to Ranakandriana, of whom mention has already been made in the chapter on idolatry. Ranakandriana, it is said, afterwards conveyed the art to Ramanitralalana, he to Rabibi-andrano, he to Raso-lava-volo, and he to Andriambavi-maitso. This was a female; and she subsequently conveyed the art to Andriam-bavi-nosy, with whom the monopoly terminated, as he generously gave it to the people, saying, "Behold, I give you the sikidy, of which you may inquire what offerings you should present in order to obtain blessings; and what expiation you should make so as to avert evils, when any are ill or under apprehension of some future calamity."

In working the sikidy, the names of the renowned ancients just related are repeated by the diviners in commencing the process, partly as a mark of respect to the memory of these illustrious personages, and partly as investing their proceedings with a certain kind of mysterious charm.

An anecdote is related by the people, in connection with the tradition that Ranakandriana imparted the knowledge of the sikidy. Two men, it is said, observed him one day apparently playing in the sand, while in fact he was working the sikidy with it.* They seized him; and, in order to obtain his liberty, he promised, if they would release him, to teach them something; and on their consenting, he instructed them thoroughly in the art of the sikidy. They then left him, and went to their chieftain, assuring him that they could tell him the past and the future—what was good and what was bad—what increased and what diminished. "Well," replied he, "tell me by what means I can obtain plenty of cattle." They accordingly worked their sikidy, and then directed him to kill all the bullocks he possessed, assuring him that great numbers would come to him on the following Friday. "But what," said the chieftain, probably thinking that to kill all his bullocks was not a likely means of obtaining more, "if your prediction should not come true?" "For that," said they, "we will guarantee our heads." The chieftain then ordered his cattle to be all killed, and waited patiently for the new supply until Thursday; when, seeing no prospect of any, and apprehending that he had been imposed upon, he very rashly and prematurely inflicted death upon the man who had first named to him the art. On Friday, however, much to the chieftain's surprise and delight, amidst heavy showers of rain, vast herds of cattle came, and actually filled an immense plain. The chieftain lamented over the death of the man he had ordered to be killed, and directed him to be buried with much pomp and ceremony. The other he took into close friendship; and ever afterwards implicitly followed the directions of the sikidy.

Two proverbial forms of speech, in common use at the present day, appear to have originated in this story. It is said of any one who is extremely impatient, and who refuses to wait a stipulated or reasonable time, Tsy mahandry andro Zoma—"he cannot wait till Friday." And when heavy showers of rain fall in rapid succession, they are called Sese omby—"a crowding together of cattle."

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* Sikidy alanana, means the sikidy worked with sand; sikidy voafano, worked with beans.

The object for which the sikidy is worked, is, to ascertain what must be done in cases of real or imaginary, present or apprehended, evils. During illness, the sikidy is the grand physician, deciding what house and village the patient may remain in, from what food he must abstain, what water he may drink, what medicines must be used, and what friends or relations may be allowed to visit him. In proposing to buy or sell, the sikidy decides whether the bargain will prove favourable or unfavourable; according to which the object is either pursued, postponed, or relinquished. When intending to visit relations or friends, the sikidy is sometimes consulted to ascertain whether the individuals are likely to be taken ill on the road or not; and in the rainy season, when in dread of thunder and lightning, the natives consult this oracle to learn the means of preservation. Illness, therefore, and a superstitious dread of some expected calamity, are the principal circumstances under which the Malagasy make their appeal to the sikidy.

The confidence they place in this mode of divination, affords demonstrative evidence of the power by which superstition subjugates and enslaves the mind; and accounts for the eagerness and tenacity with which practices are maintained, many of which are, to the natives themselves, puerile and extravagant. Their importance is derived solely from the fact that they are appointed by the sikidy; which the Malagasy regard as an answer from god, or the mode by which their gods reply to their petitions for guidance, safety, and prosperity.

The directions of the sikidy respect two different kinds of offerings; the sorona being intended to obtain favours, and the faditra to avert evils. Both, perhaps, partake more of the nature of charms than strictly of sacrifices, and the sorona especially. The faditra is a thing rejected; and in throwing it away, the offerer believes he averts some dreaded evil. There is, in this ceremony, something analogous to the institution amongst the ancient Jews, of sending away into the wilderness the scape-goat, bearing on his head the weight and curse of the confessed iniquities of the congregation of Israel. The material of the ceremony differs, and so does the mode, but the spirit and design have a resemblance; and hence the idea which first occurs to a Malagasy, in connexion with such texts of Scripture as represent Christ bearing the sins of the world, is that of a powerful faditra—the taking away of evil—the averting of suffering or death.

The sorona is essentially different. This is connected only with good, as the faditra is with evil. The sorona operates as a charm to bring the desired favour, and is sometimes an animal sacrifice, of which, when killed, the principal fat is eaten. In some cases it consists in wearing some article specified by the sikidy; and in such instances it becomes, in course of time, an ody—that is, a charm or amulet—which, though adopted at first for a particular object, is ultimately regarded as possessing some intrinsic virtue, and therefore is still worn after the imagined cause for its immediate use has ceased.

These sorona sometimes consist of pieces of silver, or of silver chains; and sometimes of beads, more or less valuable. Occasionally strings of beads, of different colours, are made, and worn around the neck and wrists of the offerer. These are called, mananarivo—“possessing a thousand;" indicating the great benefit secured by the charm to the wearer. All these offerings of silver or beads are called, Hariana tsy maty—"rejected but not dead;" that is, offered but not lost—securing an adequate return of wealth and prosperity.

At other times the sorona consists of "a young bullock which just begins to bellow and to tear up the earth with his horns." Or it may be of fowls, or of rice mixed with milk and honey, or a plantain tree laden with fruit, of the borobosy mandady, or slime from frogs floating on the water, or of the earth-nut called voanjo.

The things used in making the faditra are of still greater variety; and they are, if possible, more arbitrary than those ordered for the sorona. The faditra is made by simply throwing away the object directed. A man may stand at the door of his house, and throw the object to a few feet distance from him, pronouncing, at the same time, the word faditra, and the ceremony is performed. If the cause of trouble, the judgment, or the vengeance, under which the individual suffers, or apprehends he shall suffer, come from heaven, then the faditra consists of an herb called tsikobon-danitra. If the earth, instead of the heavens, be the source of the evil, then a water-flower is presented. If the evil come from cattle, then a grasshopper, called tsinombina, is offered. If from sheep, a small fish, called ondrindrano, or water-sheep, is offered. If from money, then a grasshopper, tsimbolavola, constitutes the faditra. If evil comes from the mouth, that is, from speaking, then the mouth or brim of a small basket is offered. If the north be source of the evil, then a tree must be presented, called tsiavaramonina—"not residing northward." If the south, then an herb is offered, called antsiontsiona. For the west, the rush, harefo, is given; and for the east, the herb anantsinahy. If fire be the origin of the evil, then the red flower, songo songo, is offered. If the evil arise from *tsiny*, the reproach or blame of parents or friends, the faditra consists of a broken fragment of the *sing* or water-vessel. If the sikidy suggest danger or sickness, a piece of a tree is offered, called sick-tree (hazomarary), meaning any tree that has been injured by accident, cutting, or maiming. If danger of death be apprehended, then some object without life is offered, or a piece of vato maty, or dead-stone, the name given to stone, especially granite, in a state of incipient disintegration. If a partial danger from witchcraft be suspected, that is, if some person is partly inclined to bewitch the offerer, then the faditra consists of the kernel or gland found in the fat of a bullock, and is called mosavin-kena.* Should the sikidy predict danger from persons collecting together—"here are the people"—burial is prognosticated; and then the faditra consists of a sort of tares called ahidratsy, or atobahoaka; at the same time some earth is offered, a distance of eight or ten feet is measured, and the faditra is thrown away from the farthest point measured. If the sikidy says, "he is caught by young men seeking for meat," this prognosticates a funeral at which meat is distributed. If it say, "he is caught by red earth thrown up," this imports digging a grave; and if it say, "his friends and relations are supporting their faces with their hands," this implies their grief on account of his death. If it affirms the earth gives way, and masses of the soil are falling off, this indicates that the sick man can no longer be retained by his friends; in other words, that death will shortly ensue. And in all these, and similar cases, there are faditra appointed; respecting which, however, it seems unnecessary to go into any further detail; they afford painfully conclusive evidence of the strong delusions under which the Malagasy pass the present state of existence, and enter upon that which is to come. It is evident that the blessings sought are those alone which relate to the present life, and that while they ascribe none of the calamities which they suffer to moral causes, no moral quality is considered necessary in the means of averting evil which they employ. No one will peruse the preceding account without commiserating their circumstances, and earnestly desiring that the time may be hastened when they shall be delivered from these lying vanities, and directed to that Divine Redeemer, who alone can deliver from the miseries present and future to which man, in consequence of sin, is exposed.

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* Mosavy is that which causes any one to become bewitched; hena (kena in composition) signifies meat—the bewitching meat. This gland is always removed as soon as an animal is cut up, or the meat would become tainted (bewitched.),

CHAP. XVI.

Tables or rules framed by the diviners for working the sikidy with beans—Explanation of the mode of divining by means of the foregoing tables or rules—Divination also practised with sand—Astrology of the Malagasy—Pretended means of ascertaining fortunate and unfortunate days—Calculating the destiny of individuals—Supposed Arabian origin of astrology and divination among the Malagasy—Names of the moons or months—Division of each moon or month—Diagram of the months by which destinies are calculated, or events foretold—Difference of the calendars used on the coast and in the interior—General manner of calculating time—Means by which it is pretended individual destiny is ascertained.

The preceding chapter contains an account of the sikidy, or the kind of divination universally practised in Madagascar. The subject itself is painfully interesting, as a popular form of deception, by which, as in the case of infanticide, life is often destroyed under deeply affecting circumstances. The following tables shew the method of working the sikidy with beans called voafana.

Table I.

The names of the sixteen positions or combinations, which may be formed in the process.

Taraika.	Jama.	Vontsira.	Saka.	Molahidy.	Mikiarja.	Kizo.	Adikiasajy.	Asoralahy.	Asoravavy.	Alokola.	Aditsimay.	Adibijady.	Alemora.	Alezany.	Adikisy.
1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2
1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2
1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2
1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1

TABLE II.

Toetry—Ground-work. The condition or basis of the sikidy.

Vohitra.	Fahatelo.	Harena.	Tale.	
2	1	1	2	Fianahana.
2	2	1	2	Marina.
1	1	1	2	Vehivavy.
2	2	1	2	Fahavalo.

The above sixteen squares are blank spaces when the mpisikidy, the diviners, commence the process, and are filled by them in the following manner:—

A quantity of beans are placed in a heap, and from these is taken, at a guess, say a handful, from which the diviner withdraws first two, then two more, and so on, successively, until two only are left, or, it may be, the odd number, one; in either case, he takes this residue, and places it in the highest (blank) space on the right side of the toetry, the ground of sixteen spaces just named. He next returns the beans, which had been withdrawn, two at a time, to the general heap, and again takes a handful from the said heap, and then withdraws two at a time, as before, till he comes to the residue, either of one or two, and places this immediately under the space already filled; and the same process is then repeated, to fill the third and fourth spaces. The second line is next filled, observing the same order, and then the third and fourth lines successively, and thus the square is completed. The next business is to form the third table.

TABLE III.

Vohitra.	Fahatelo.	Harana.	Tale.	
2	1	1	2	Fianahana.
2	2	1	2	Marina.
1	1	1	2	Vehivavy.
2	2	1	2	Fahavalo.

Ra. Tsimahay.

Tsiefa.

Sakaizamanady.

	Odovy.	Mpisikidy.	Nia.	Andriamanitra.	Andriana.	Ontany.	Lalambe.	Trano.	
Vihita.	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	Tsiary.
Amboa.	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	Vazimba.
Olondratsy.	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	Vehivavy hafa.
Soavetivity.	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	Firiariavana.

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EXPLANATION.—The *upper* part of the annexed or third table, is the *second* table, and introduced merely to shew how the lower part (which is strictly the *third* table) is formed.

The spaces in the lower part are filled in part by combinations from those of the second table, and in part from those new combinations themselves.

Thus, add together the numbers in the two upper spaces of the first and second lines in the second table, (under which a bracket is placed,) and deducting two, if the amount exceed two ; place the remainder in the second line of spaces of the third table, commencing, as before, on the right hand.

Proceed in the same manner through those two lines, and the whole second line of the third table will be completed. Lines the third and fourth of the second table, will then be employed to form the *fourth* line of the third table. These second and fourth lines of the third table must then form, in the same manner, the third column of the same table. The two bottom lines, taken *horizontally*, of the second table, then make the eighth column of the third table ; and the two upper lines of the second, taken also horizontally, form the sixth column of the third table ; the sixth and eighth form the seventh, and the seventh and third the fifth ; and this fifth, which is the most important in this table, combined with the first, or Tale, in the second table, (the most important in that,) will form the only remaining blank column, namely, the first in the third table. In other words, taking the columns by their respective names,

Tale and Harona ..... form Lalambe.
Fahatelo and Vohitra - Andriana.
Andriana and Lalambe - Ontany.
Fahavalo and Vehivavy - Odovy.
Marina and Fianahana - Nia.
Nia and Odovy - Mpsikidy.
Mpsikidy and Ontany - Andriamanitra.
Andriamanitra and Tale - Trano.

Thus a table, containing eight new combinations, is formed from the figures 1 and 2; and to each column is appropriated its own name, whether taken perpendicularly, horizontally, or diagonally.

The mode of ascertaining decisions is then made by comparing, according to certain rules, these columns; say, one of the third table with a given column in the second; or of the second and third with another in the third; or of some one or two of either with a given column in the first.

It is said by the diviners that the column called Andriaminitra (god) is never found to correspond with either of the following eight columns in the first table, namely, Adikisy, Alezany, Alemora, Abidijady, Adikiajy, Kizo, Saka, Vontsira.(*)

The sikidy decides respecting the Sorona and the Faditra by these comparisons. If the Asorolahy (ninth column of first table) correspond with the Andriamanitra, a bead must be offered as a sorona, called Vakan-tsi-leon-doza, i.e. overcoming the calamity. If the Vohitra meet the Tale, then a piece of a tree that grows in the villages (not in the fields) must be offered. If the result of Nia and Trano (i. e. adding them, and deducting two each time) correspond with Tale, the sorona is Vato-tsi-very, i. e. "a stone not lost," meaning a stone thrown to a short distance, and then carefully picked up and preserved by some friend or relation, and so not lost.

Many other comparisons are made in a similar manner, and to each is attached its specific direction. But it appears unnecessary to specify more, as the object of this explanation is rather to afford a general idea of the process, than to enable its readers to become sikidy workers, in all its ramifications of mystery, puerility, and parade of pompous littleness.

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* The writers of this sketch do not vouch for the correctness of this conclusion, namely, that the column called Andriamanitra never agrees with either of the above eight columns. Probably the chances are prodigiously against such a correspondence. Never having discovered it, the Malagasy attribute to the circumstance something supernatural and divine, and hence give it the name of *god*, meaning, probably, *wonderful*.

It is also deemed superfluous to describe the mode of working by means of sand. This consists of drawing certain lines and configurations on sand, in the same manner as the geomancy of the Arabs, to whom Flacourt attributes the knowledge of all the arts of divination now possessed by the Malagasy.

The ocult science of genethlialogy, or casting nativities, prevails extensively among the Malagasy. The persons who hold the office are called mpanandro, and their business is called fanandro.* The science can scarcely be denominated astrology, with strict propriety, since it depends wholly on a reference to the moon. No observation is made on any other planet whatever. The design is to ascertain a person's vintana, or destiny; and to effect this, his birth is compared with the age and situation of the moon at the time; and on this depends the decision whether his life shall be spared or not—as already referred to in the notice respecting infanticide. The mpanandro also decide, by the same means, what days are fortunate, or otherwise, for commencing or transacting any important business; such, for example, as the sovereign's quitting the capital on a journey or campaign, or his returning home from either; or for the planting of rice, sowing seed, laying the foundation of a house, marrying, &c.

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* The verb is manandro, to predict or foretell; fanandro, is the mode of predicting; and fanandroana, the means used in predicting. The root of the word is andro, "day," to which is prefixed man—from manao, to make or do; i. e. to make a day—to ascertain what a day is, to calculate days, so as to determine whether they be favourable or otherwise.

The different provinces in the island have different modes of calculating the character of given days; but the varieties are too unimportant to be separately particularised, or enumerated. The natives of the interior appear to be indebted to those of the coast for what they know of the subject, and these again to the Arabs, who have long been settled in Matitangna (Matitanana.)

The Malagasy year is lunar, consisting of twelve months, or more properly *moons.* (Volana is the only word in the Malagasy language for the two words month and moon—and its proper signification is the latter.) The division of the year into four seasons has been already described in the account given of the climate.

The names of the twelve moons are as follows, as they are denominated in the interior of the island, on the eastern coast, by the Betsimisaraka, and on the west by the Sakalava. Those of the interior, it will be seen, are quite different from those on the coast; and on the two coasts nearly similar names are employed for moons at different parts of the year:—

English.	Malagasy Moons.	Interior.	East.	West.
April	1	Alahamady	Volasira	Sakamasay
May	2	Adaoro	Ifosa	Sakavehy
June	3	Adizaozy	Maka	Volambita
July	4	Asorotany	Tsiahia	Saramaimbo
August	5	Alahasaty	Sakasay	Saramanitra
September	6	Asombola	Sakavehy	Vatravatra
October	7	Adimizana	Volambita	Anjoloka
November	8	Alakarabo	Saramantzina	Volasira
December	9	Alakaozy	Tsiaramanitra	Hatsiha
January	10	Adijady	Vatravatra	Zaray
February	11	Adalo	Asotry	Maka
March	12	Alahotsy	Hatsiha	Hiahia

It must be observed on the above list, that although the English months are placed opposite the Malagasy months, they can correspond only occasionally. Alahamady, for example, is invariably the first month in the Malagasy year; this in 1821 occurred in June; in 1829, in the month of April; and, as will be presently explained, it will continue to recede each year, till, in the course of thirty-three years from 1821, it will again occur in June.

The names of the twelve moons are also applied to each day of the moon; so that, besides the number of the day of the month, as 1st, 2d, 3d, &c. there is also the *name* of the day; thus, Vavany Alahamady—Vontony Alahamady—and Farany Alahamady—and these will occur not only in the moon of Alahamady itself, but in every moon throughout the year.

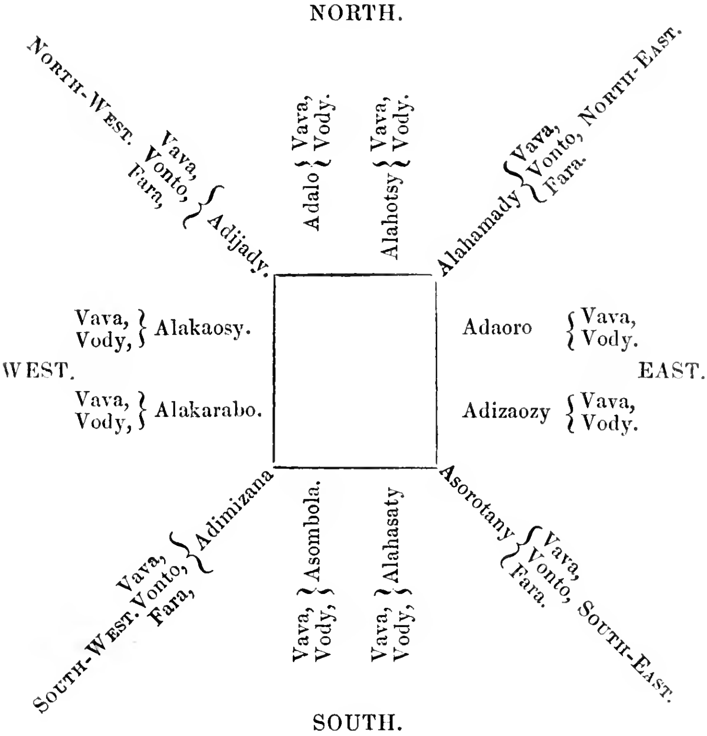
Each day has also its divisions, though fewer in number, but in which the same names are employed, so far as they are required; and this answers the purpose of the artificial division of day and night into hours.

The Malagasy year consists of 354 days, namely,

12 months of 28 days each	336
And additional, or intercalary	18
	354

The 18 intercalary are added, by allowing one day between every month as its vintana, and one day extra to each of four months in the year, and two at the close of the year, determined by the mode of calculation which the Malagasy adopt in fixing their great annual feast, or fandroana.

Eleven days and a quarter are thus lost in the Malagasy year, compared with the true solar year. Hence in every 33 years a complete revolution is effected, and the year commences again at the same period. Thirty-three years is the Malagasy cycle, in which period the fandroana is held at the same season of the year.


NORTH.
NORTH-WEST.
Vava,
Vonto,
Fara,
Adijady.
Adalo
Vava,
Vody.
Alahotsy
Vava,
Vody.
Alahamady
Vava,
Vonto,
Fara.
NORTH-EAST.
Vava,
Vody,
Alakaosy.
WEST.
Vava,
Vody,
Alakarabo.
Adaoro
Vava,
Vody.
EAST.
Adizaozy
Vava,
Vody.
Adimizana
Vava,
Vonto,
Fara,
SOUTH-WEST.
Asombola.
Vava,
Vody,
Alahasaty
Vava,
Vody,
Asorotany
Vava,
Vonto,
Fara.
SOUTH-EAST.
SOUTH.

The Malagasy, who are little accustomed to number the years they have lived, sometimes allude to the circumstance of their having seen and remembered three fandroana at the same season. Now, supposing a person seven years of age when the feast occurred in Spring—he would be forty when it occurred again in Spring, and seventy-three at the third. A youth lately mentioned that his great-great-grandfather (then living) had seen four, consequently he must have been at least one hundred years of age.

To each of the names of moons in the four corners of the table, 3 days are allowed, making for each 4×3	12 days.
To each of the other eight names of months, being two on each of the four sides of the square, four days are allowed, making a total of 8×2	16
	28 days.

The preceding diagram, or table, shews the manner in which the Malagasy reckon their months, days, and divisions of days, with reference to the cardinal points of the heavens, and by which they decide whether they are fortunate or unfortunate. The Malagasy do not themselves use any written diagrams of the kind, but they apply the arrangement to the several parts of their houses, calling, for example, the north-east corner of the house alahamady, and so of the rest.

It will be seen that the annexed twelve names are those already given as the names of the twelve moons of the year. To *four* of these three names are added, namely, "vava," signifying mouth, or opening; "vonto," increase; and "fara," termination, end. To the eight other names, two additions are made, "vava," as above, "opening," and "vody," "end, close."

This calendar, of a month or year, may be more clearly seen by placing the days under each other in one line as follows, viz.

The first month in the year is Alahamady, and is thus calculated:—

3 days	in Alahamady,	viz.	Vava	1st	day of month.
		,,	Vonto	2	,,
		,,	Fara	3	,,
2 ,,	in Adaoro	,,	Vava	4	,,
		,,	Vody	5	,,
2 ,,	in Adizaozy	,,	Vava	6	,,
		,,	Vody	7	,,
3 ,,	in Asorotany	,,	Vava	8	,,
		,,	Vonto	9	,,
		,,	Fara	10	,,
2 ,,	in Alahasaty	,,	Vava	11	,,
		,,	Vody	12	,,
2 ,,	in Asombola	,,	Vava	13	,,
		,,	Vody	14	,,
3 ,,	in Adimizana	,,	Vava	15	,,
		,,	Vonto	16	,,
		,,	Fara	17	,,
2 ,,	in Alakarabo	,,	Vava	18	,,
		,,	Vody	19	,,
2 ,,	in Alakaoza	,,	Vava	20	,,
		,,	Vody	21	,,
3 ,,	in Adijady	,,	Vava	22	,,
		,,	Vonto	23	,,
		,,	Fara	24	,,
2 ,,	in Adalo	,,	Vava	25	,,
		,,	Vody	26	,,
2 ,,	in Alahotsy	,,	Vava	27	,,
		,,	Vody	28	,,
28					

Two days are then allowed for the vintana of the moon, and the second moon commences. Its names are the same as those annexed, beginning with Alahamady and ending with Alahotsy. The same mode is adopted for each successive month of the year, allowing always for the Vintana either one day or two days, as invariably fixed.

The calendar for the year therefore stands thus—

Alahamady	28	days.
Vintana, called Vava in Alahamady, and Fara in Alahamady, (reckoned a second time before Adaoro begins)	2	„
2d and 3d months, 28 each	56	„
1 day Vintana to each, intercalary	2	„
3 remaining months in the points of the diagram, 4th, 7th, and 10th, at 28 each .	84	„
2 days Vintana to each as above	6	„
6 remaining months, 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 12th, at 28	168	„
1 day each Vintana to ditto	6	„
And before commencing the new year additional	2	„
Total	354	

It is obvious that this calculation of 354 days to the year is a very near approximation to the true time occupied by twelve synodical revolutions of the moon, viz.

$$12 \times \overset{\text{days,}}{29} \,.\, \overset{\text{hours,}}{12} \,.\, \overset{\text{min.}}{44} \,.\, \overset{\text{sec.}}{3} = 354 \,.\, 8 \,.\, 48 \,.\, 36.$$

In three years, however, the difference of a whole day might convince the Malagasy that their calculations must be erroneous; and in the lapse of a few more years, they might find the moon at the *full*, while their calendar announced only *new* moon. No practical difficulty, however, of the kind exists. Their annual festival, the Fandroana, can happen only on a Thursday or a Sunday, and on one of these two days alternately every year. And by this arrangement, together with the allowance for Vintana, (which can be made to suit their actual observations on the changes of the moon, at the close of the year,) it so occurs, that their computations are corroborated by their senses, and they *see* the new moon about the time their Mpanandro predict there is to be one.

It may not be altogether unworthy of remark, that the names of the twelve moons, used in the interior, are those which Flacourt has given as the names of the 12 signs of the zodiac, and as used by the Malagasy for that purpose in the province of Anosy. The names used for the months of the year, as given by the same writer, nearly correspond with those given for the East, page 224 of this volume. The inhabitants of Imerina must have received therefore the names of their months from the natives in the south-east of the island; but instead of applying them to the zodiac, of which they seem to have no idea, they have applied them to their moons. The *meaning* of the names corresponds with the signs of the zodiac; at least, they correspond in part in Imerina, and probably more so, or entirely, in the provinces to the south, where they were, most likely, first introduced by the Arabs.

As the work of Flacourt has become scarce, it may not be unacceptable to present here the list he has given of the names now mentioned for the sake of comparison. (See first column in page 452.)

AUTUMN.	Alahemali	Aries.
	Azoro	Taurus.
	Alizozo	Gemini.

WINTER.	Asarata	Cancer.
	Alaasade	Leo.
	Asomboulo	Virgo.
SPRING.	Alimiza	Libra.
	Alacarabo	Scorpio.
	Alacossi	Sagittarius.
SUMMER.	Alizadi	Capricornus.
	Adalo	Aquarius.
	Alohotsi	Pisces.

The change of the letter *l* on the coast into *d*, for the dialect of the interior, will be seen in several instances of the above list; it is extremely common, and has already been observed in the words oli, for ody; and squile, for sikidy.

These twelve signs, however, as appears from Flacourt, are not used in connexion with the science of astronomy, but merely in relation to judicial astrology. They are made to have some relation to the days of the moon, and so to regulate the fortunes or destinies of people. The twenty-eight days of the month are described by the above writer, from which it appears that the 12 signs hold the same place as in the calendar for Imerina, but that the days allotted to each have their *respective names;* whereas in Imerina, they are called, as already shown, the "opening," "increase," and "termination," of the 12 moons. The annexed is the list of the days of the month as given by Flacourt:—

3 days, Alahemali	Asoroatin—Aloboutin—Azouriza.
2 days, Azoro	Adobora—Alahacha.
2 days, Alizozo	Alahena—Azera.
3 days, Assarata	Anassara—Atarafi—Alizaba.
2 days, Alaasade	Hazouboura—Assarafa.
2 days, Adalou	Sadaalacabia—Fara alimou cadimou.

2 days, Assombola	Alaauna—Assimaca.
3 days, Alimiza	Aloucoufoura—Azoubana—Alichilli.
2 days, Alacarabou	Acalabili—Asaola.
2 days, Alacossi	Anaïnou—Alibalado.
3 days, Alizadi	Sadazabé—Sadaboulaga—Sadazoudi.
2 days, Alohotsi	Fara alemoucarou—Baten Alohotsi.

To return to a notice of the days, as to their being lucky or unlucky. The vava, or "opening," of all the twelve moons is considered unlucky, and so also are the fara'ny of those in the four cardinal points. The vonto, "increase," of each moon is good or lucky, as also are the "vody," or terminations. Thus, out of 28, 16 are unlucky, namely, twelve vava, and four fara; and 12 only are lucky, namely, four vonto, and eight vody.

Each day is susceptible of its subdivisions, and the same names are again employed for this purpose; e. g. Alahamady vava is sunrise; Asorotany vava, mid-day; and Adimizana vava, sunset. With this, night commences, and their Adijady vava is midnight; and Alahamady the end of night, or sunrise.

Thus the diagram is made to answer, (so far as astrology is concerned,) as an almanack for the months of the year, the days of the month, and the hours of the day; so that sunrise on new-year's day would be, in the description of the Mpanandro, Alahamady vava (hour), or Alahamady vava (day) in Alahamady. For the ordinary purposes of life the method is far more simple; as the names of the months alone are used, the day is signified by numbers from 1 to 28, and the divisions of the day by some reference to the length of shadows—the height of the sun; or circumstance in the customs of the people—driving out cattle, returning them to the folds, &c.

The larger divisions of the day and night just named, viz.

sunrise, mid-day, sunset, midnight, and morning again, are all that are usually noticed. In cases requiring great exactness, minor and intermediate divisions are formed by means of the allotted portions to each of the four cardinal points, allowing six hours to each of those four points, and two hours to each of their subdivisions, thus—

6	o'clock	morning —	sunrise —	Alahamady	vava
8	,,	,,	,,	,,	vonto
10	,,	,,	,,	,,	fara
12	,,	mid-day	,,	Asorotany	vava
2	,,	afternoon	,,	,,	vonto
4	,,	,,	,,	,,	fara
6	,,	,,	sunset	Adimizana	vava
8	,,	evening	,,	,,	vonto
10	,,	,,	,,	,,	fara
12	,,	midnight	,,	Adijady	vava
2	,,	morning	,,	,,	vonto
4	,,	,,	,,	,,	fara
6	,,	Then follows as above, sunrise, Alahamady vava.			

A person's *vintana*, or destiny, is determined according to the day, or time of the day, in which he is born. If that happen to be unlucky, it, namely the *day*, is called *mahery vintana*, that is, "powerful as to destiny;" meaning, "too powerful for him; he is its victim."

Some cases exist, in which, though the vintana is *mahery*, it may be extracted, (ala ny ny vintana,) or withdrawn, by means of an offering which averts evil, a "faditra." Those who decide on this, are called "mpanala vintana,"—extractors of the destiny; and these form a distinct class from the mpanandro. All the latter are not necessarily mpanala vintana, but *vice versa*, all who understand how to "extract the evil fortune," must understand the rules of the astrologer.

A specific faditra is appointed, as the case may require. It will be sufficient to notice a few of these.

As the vava of Alahamady is unlucky, the faditra must be a piece of odinato, (wood used in dyeing red,) and the flowers (a beautiful scarlet) of the songo songo, and the offerer repeats, "The offering of what is red, for fear of the thunder-bolt, and for fear of being shot, or speared, &c., I offer this, which is red, to keep it away,—let this avert it."

The opening of the second month is unlucky. Of any one born on this day, it is predicted that his house will be burnt when he arrives at maturity. His relations must, therefore, erect a shed in the fields, or cattle-folds, and burn it; and if any ask them why they are doing that, they are to answer, "It is offered as a means of prevention; this house is offered to avert evil, it is demanded by the populace, and we offer it: let the evil be removed, let it be averted with this." A short prayer is also offered, "Lord god, let the evil depart; let it be freed with this."

The opening of Adizaoza is unlucky, and a poison is suspected, especially in their food, called Voankanina, (seed, or fruit in food.) The faditra, to avert this, consists of a seed or fruit, which is hung up as directed. They must then say, "This disease will injure him. Behold, lord god, the disease would hurt or kill; let it be averted with this."

Both the vava and vody of the next month, the fourth, are unlucky, and the vintana must be withdrawn, as it would deform a person; i. e. his property would be but transient. The faditra is a piece of striped cloth, (lamba sampona,) partly beautiful, and partly the reverse, as an emblem of deformity. Something green that grows in winter must also be offered, as implying that which is stunted and imperfect.

The opening of Alahasaty is deemed very bad, especially from midnight to cock-crowing in the morning. Children born this day are to be put to death. Such, at least, is the rule of the panandro. A faditra is, however, sometimes offered, especially if the child be not born within the time from midnight to cock-crowing, or should the parents and relations be fond of the babe. Then the voa mainty, (or seed of bret,) is offered as a faditra, or a voa-lefo-maty, i. e., a seed which has become rotten. Generally, fear would preponderate; the gloomy prediction is, the child would become pamosavy, and he would rise in rebellion against his sovereign, his father, and his mother; and to avert the evil, the infant must be suffocated or buried alive.

The opening of the ninth month is extremely unlucky. It is the vintana of the sovereign, and any one born on that day would rebel against his parents, relations, and friends.

The vava of the eleventh month predicts grief and sorrows. The faditra consists of the sap of a tree, called the grief or tear of the Takatra.

The last month is all good.

The days which are leaped over, as intervening between the close of one month and the commencement of another, are considered good.

Should a child be born to a slave of the sovereign, or even to any member of his family, or even to himself, on the vava of Asorotany, or of Alakaosy, it must be put to death. If belonging to any one else, a faditra may be offered, and the child suffered to live.

The vava of Alakarabo is the day of seeds; it is considered good for planting and sowing. The produce will be great.

The vava of Alakaosy and of Alakarabo is good for the sovereign to appear in public, to commence a journey, to set out for war, &c.

The vody of the third, fourth, and fifth months is good for laying the foundation of a house, or for entering a new habitation; but the vava of the fourth would he highly improper for such purposes, as it always indicates a speedy change, and therefore would imply a speedy removal from such house. But for the same reason it is good for trade; the articles for sale will find a quick market. Every thing transacted on this day will be brief and transitory.

The vava of Alakaosy is the strongest of all. It is for children born on this day that the revolting custom (strange compound of mercy and cruelty) of placing children at the entrance of the cattle-fold, prevails; and which has already been described in the account given of infanticide: when, *should* the infant live, its vintana is considered *conquered*, and the child may then be brought up!

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[*] For Radama's interdiction of this law or custom, see remarks on Infanticide.

CHAP. XVII.

Trial by ordeal in Madagascar—Uncertainty respecting its origin—Various modes practised in different parts of the island—General use of the tangena—Description of the fruit—Cases in which the tangena is employed—Manner of preferring an accusation among the inhabitants of the interior—Preparations for drinking the poison—Translation of the invocation or curse used in its administration—Copious use of rice-water—Appearances regarded as indicating innocence or guilt—Summary death in case of the latter—Ceremonies attending an acquittal—Mode and effects of administering the poison-water on the coast—Cases in which it is administered to animals and fowls—Motives by which the natives are induced to employ it—Anecdotes illustrating the fallacy of its decisions—Probable number destroyed by the poison—Notice of witchcraft among the Malagasy—Singular instance of its influence recorded by Drury—General dread of sorcery—Terrible death inflicted on those supposed to be guilty of it.

The custom of trial by ordeal prevails extensively in Madagascar. Of the period when first introduced, no idea can be formed. It probably came with the original settlers in the island. Various modes have been in use in different parts of the country, and possibly may still be at some distance from the capital; such as passing a red-hot iron over the tongue, or plunging the naked arm into a large earthen or iron pot full of boiling water, and picking out a pebble thrown in for the special purpose of the trial; and in either case, to sustain no injury would be a demonstration of innocence.

The practice which has obtained most generally, and has in fact superseded other modes in most of the conquered provinces, is that which is called the Tangēna.

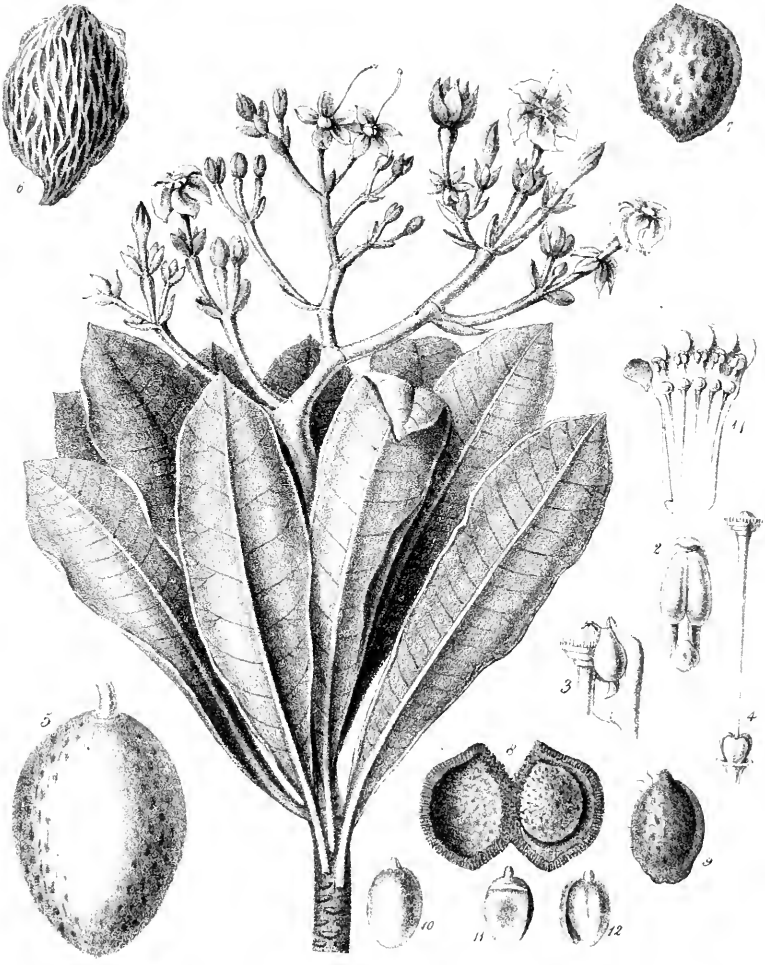
The general name is fămpinŏana, "drinking." It is also called, "misŏtro tangĕna," to drink the tangena. The tangena is literally a fruit, deriving its name from the tree which bears it. It is a nut about the size of an English horse-chestnut. It grows abundantly in the island. It appears to be a most powerful poison, but if taken in small doses only, sometimes operates simply as an emetic, which is in fact the mode of its employment in the ordeal now to be described. The natives believe it to be poisonous, and hence it is reported that they have endeavoured by throwing it into the water used for drinking, to poison those whom they wished to destroy.

Many affirm, that "the lust of money" is at the root of this custom, and certainly so much wealth accrues at those periods to the persons concerned in laying accusations and administering the poison, that this idea does not appear destitute of foundation. A dollar and sixty-three cents is the fee given for every individual who recovers, besides many perquisites and private presents. One individual can administer the tangena to eight persons in one day; and when the accused dies, the officiating person receives a twenty-fourth part of the whole property not bequeathed before the accusation. The diviners also reap a large harvest from these iniquitous practices; they attend daily for eight or ten days before and after the drinking takes place, and receive one dollar or more according to the wealth of the accused.

The whole system is characterized by the most heartless cruelty. One of the officers accused in 1831 was actually watching the corpse of his father when the appointed person knocked at his door. He begged to be excused till after the funeral, declaring that he only asked a few days' delay, not exemption; none, however, could be granted, and he was dragged off from performing the last offices of filial affection, to the scene of ignominious and protracted trial.

The deception practised in the whole transaction is evident to every sensible native. The parties administering the poison have it in their power to permit any criminal to escape, and for a reward they often exercise this partiality. They frequently recover slaves who have been pronounced dead, by giving them copious draughts of water, in which certain herbs have been boiled. The individuals so saved are sent to a great distance, and sold, as they cannot be suffered to remain in the place where the ordeal had been administered to them unless when proved innocent; and they are disposed of as prize-property, their own fears preventing them from ever disclosing the transaction to the families of their new masters. It is equally certain that the administrators can sacrifice whom they please. The fruit, which appears very red, is protested against by the friends of the accused, on the tacit understanding that such a fruit will destroy, whether innocent or guilty. Sometimes the fruit acts as a poison, though generally as an emetic. It is known that a visible difference does exist between that which occasions vomiting, and that which destroys; the latter always presenting a slight appearance of redness. The people declare that this hue is miraculously assumed, and regard the change as an infallible sign of death to the accused. Yet if this redness be exceedingly plain, the relations who are present desire that such a fruit may be rejected, and another chosen; this proposal is probably agreed to, but the next fruit exhibits the same ominous presage; and the victim dies.

The plant or tree has been described scientifically by several eminent botanists and among others, by Professor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Tanghinia veneniflua

Fisher, Son & Co. London and Paris

Bojer, of Mauritius,* who has given the following description, accompanied by a plate exhibiting the plant, from which the annexed representation has been copied.

This mode of trial is not restricted to any particular class of offences, real or imaginary, nor are there any privileged classes, claiming, by prescript of law or custom, exemption from its application.†

The ordeal is sometimes administered in cases of private charge, or suspicion, and at other times by a general permission, obtained, on application, from the sovereign, to try a whole town or district. In both cases the customs observed in the actual administration of the ordeal so nearly correspond as to render a minute detail of the differences unnecessary.

Supposing it to be determined that the ordeal be administered to a village or clan, the sovereign issues a kabary to this effect, "I am about to effect a separation among my subjects; I shall renew the tangena, and not suffer the wicked to remain in my country. What my ancestors did, I shall do, and shall purify the land; yet when ye accuse, accuse not from malice, or prejudice; but if ye accuse at all, let it be with truth."

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* *Tanghinia veneniflua*; Fig. 1. The corolla laid open, to exhibit the insertion of the stamens, and the glands at their base. Fig. 2; A stamen more clearly shewing the gland at the base, and the appendage at the top. Fig. 3; Stamen and upper part of the style, shewing how the stigma is sheathed by the anthers. Fig. 4; Pistil; all magnified. Fig. 5; Fruit. Fig. 6; The nut as it appears when the pulp, or sarcocarp, is destroyed, the reticulated fibres remaining attached to both extremities. Fig. 7; The nut, the fibres being removed. Fig. 8; The nut laid open. Fig. 9; The seed. Fig. 10; The embryo. Fig. 11; Embryo with one of its cottyledons removed. Fig. 12; Embryo with its two cottyledons a little spreading.

† A new case occurred at the capital in 1829, when the army obtained an exemption.

The people then assemble, and deliberate and determine as to the time, place, and parties to commence with. After this they again meet at the time agreed on, to receive the mutual criminations, and ascertain the precise number of those said to be "bewitched." A lamb whose dam is dead, and therefore called a poor lamb, is brought to the spot by two men, (leprous, if such are at hand,) that curses may be denounced against false accusations, malice, and criminal concealment, through friendship,—a crime, in such cases, in the estimation of the Malagasy, equal to "misprision of high treason." The lamb having been killed, is mangled; the head cut off and placed at the tail, and the tail cut off and placed at the bleeding neck, and the fore and hind feet cut off and reversed. The lepers walk near the people, and say, "If any accuse through malice and hatred, or on account of former disputes or litigation, let him be accursed utterly, dried up from the earth; and having none to succeed him, let him become a piaculum for his town, let him become leprous, and be divided and mangled as this lamb. Or if any one conceal, whether father or mother, brother or sister, relation or friend, whom he knows to be mamosavy, "bewitched," let him be as this lamb, and without one to succeed him for ever!"

This finished, the accusations are made—"I have seen one," says an accuser, "with his cloth over his head, playing on a tomb, or on the pillow of the dead;" "and I," says another, "have seen one nursing a wild cat in the moat, or descending into the cattle-fold;" "and I," says another accuser, "have seen one dancing on the grass fresh taken from the stomach of a newly killed animal,"—or, I have seen one going into a house at midnight,—or, committing murder, or, having given food to a sick man, which has proved fatal. They are then asked if they are agreed in their accusations, and replying in the affirmative, add an imprecation of vengeance on themselves if they have acted through malice, and accused falsely. If one individual only be found as a witness in any case, his testimony is not accepted, and the accused party is not reckoned for the ordeal.

The parties present admit of a threefold division: the Voanjo, the Loholona, and the Vahoaka. The Voanjo are a sort of supreme judges for the occasion—the Loholona, or heads of people, the medium between the Voanjo and the people—the people being the Vahoaka.

The voanjo then appoint persons to watch those who are accused, and in the dusk of the evening to say, "Keep the embers burning through the night—for the chances are equal for all, and let there not be anger against us."

At cock-crowing in the morning, the voanjo approach the house, and knock at the door of the accused. In the act of knocking, they pluck a little thatch from the eastern side of the roof, to be a "faditra" for themselves, saying, "May I not suffer like this in my latter end, nor in those who succeed me!" They then call the accused three times by name, knocking still at his door. When aroused, he blows up the embers on the hearth, and opens the door. The voanjo enter, and ask, "How is this, that the people accuse you of being mamosāvy? What property have you, and what have you given your children? Tell the truth without lying, for judgment has come." His relations are next sent for, to watch around the premises, and to see the ordeal administered. During the administration, no fowl, nor dog, nor stranger may enter the premises—none but the relations whom the sikidy permits, the voanjo who superintend the business, and the "panozondoah," denouncers of the curse.

It being now broad daylight, and the relations having arrived, the accused is taken out of his house, and then brought back, his head being covered with a mat. The sikidy decides in what house he is to drink the tangena, and how he is to enter, whether by the door, the window, the roof, or by cutting away some of the rushes of which the sides of the house are constructed.

During this time some of the voanjo retire, and fetch two chickens and a fowl; the former in order to try the quality of the tangena, and the latter to be killed, from which three pieces of skin are to be presently swallowed by the accused.

A quantity of rice is also cooked, of which the accused must eat plentifully. This is called the lafikia, or "bed." Rice-water is also prepared, the water of which must be obtained from a running stream. During the administration, no one is allowed to sit on his lamba (long robe,) nor to wear the sarandrana (cloth round the waist,) and females must keep their shoulders uncovered.

The "cursers" bring the tangena, suspended in a small bag, at the point of a spear, and saying, "We are here, that he who would bewitch shall be confounded and perish; judgment shall enter,—accursed and without progeny shall be the mamosāvy, and let the malediction return home on the head of him that bewitched him."

The accused, having eaten as much rice as possible, *swallows three pieces of the skin of a fowl* killed for the purpose, each piece about the size of a dollar, and *swallowed whole.* A bite would be fatal evidence of being bewitched. Three spoonsful of rice are taken with each.

The "cursers" now prepare the tangena, scraping a small quantity of the nut into some juice of a banana, and repeating the mysterious, talismanic words, "Tomadi mariko." The virtue of the tangena is tried on two chickens before being given to the accused person. One of the chickens having been made to swallow it, the "curser" exclaims, "Hear, oh

Test, if thou art a perfect judge—if not false—if just and suitable, kill this chicken!" The other having drank it, he exclaims, "Hear, O Test, if thou art a suitable and rightous test, let this chicken live!" Should both die, the tangena is pronounced bad, as it does not give to the accused a fair chance of being found innocent; or if both live, it is rejected, as not having the virtue requisite to detect and convict the guilty. In either case, other tangena must be provided. Should one die, and one live, it is of course declared suitable and just. (It will be readily supposed that unequal quantities are given, so as to secure the effect desired, however the *pretence* may be, to give an equal portion to each.)

The accused is then seated on the floor in the middle of the house,—a hole dug opposite to him, and a fish-basket placed in it.* He must now drink the carefully prepared draught, on which hinges life or death. As soon as he has swallowed it, the panozondoha, or "curser," placing his hand on the crown of the head of the accused, pronounces the imprecation or prayer, which is sometimes uttered before the tangena is given.

The following is a correct translation, furnished by the Rev. David Jones, of part of the imprecation frequently employed:—

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou, Raimanamango, searcher, trier, or test; thou art a round egg,† made by God. Though thou hast no eyes, yet thou seest; though thou hast no ears, yet thou hearest; though thou hast no mouth, yet thou answerest: therefore, hear, and hearken well, O Raimanamango!

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* Called the Tandroho,—long, cylindrical, and tapering at one end. Its use, in the effects of the emetic, will appear from the sequel.

† Alluding to the size and shape of the nut from which the poison is prepared.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango, for thou art come hither from very far, even from the four quarters of the earth. Thou hast been brought from yonder, for silver and beads, to decide in judgment between the sovereign and the people, to condemn the guilty and justify the innocent; therefore, hear, hear, and hearken well, for thou didst come up to Ivohombohitra among Zafimbolasirana and Andrianintoarivo. There were there kings reigning then who were prior to Zanadralambo. When they then decided in judgment, it was not justly done; it was having respect to persons, it was done through bribery, it was an unjust judgment given, and it was not according to truth. But thou hatest such judgments as these; and thou art just, scorning bribery, and having respect to persons in thy decisive judgment: therefore, hear, and hearken well, O Raimanamango.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango; for the sorcerer (mpamosavy) is not yonder in the field, nor out of town: he is not like what is in imagination only; he is not hidden out of sight, nor separated and screened by a partition; he is not a mere lamba (cloth) shaped like him: but (pointing to the man sitting on the floor) behold him sitting, even his very person, here, opposite thee: therefore, be not mistaken nor deceived concerning him, O Raimanamango. If thou findest that he has the root of sorcery, or the trunk of sorcery, or the leaves of sorcery, which he himself has fetched, or which others have brought for him, and that his heart was pleased with it, his mouth consented to take it, and his hand laid hold of it to take it for himself, and that at the same time he knew well within himself that it was the real means for bewitching—then kill him immediately, kill him instantly, let him die forthwith, tear his flesh, wring or twist his bowels, tear them into pieces. For thou, Raimanamango, art god, who wilt not permit sorcerers, that murder people, to live; therefore, if thou findest that he is guilty of sorcery, kill him.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango; for the sorcerer is not yonder in the field, nor one named by any person, nor one in imagination, nor out of town, nor out of sight, nor separated by a partition; but behold him, yea, his very self, sitting here opposite thee. If thou findest that he has not the root of sorcery, nor the trunk of sorcery, nor the branch of sorcery, nor the leaves of sorcery; yea, that he has not the root of sorcery, neither has fetched it from persons, nor received any from the hands of those who brought it, nor had any desire to have it from those who delight in dirtying clear water; yea, if he has, not at all, the spirit of sorcery within him,—let him live quickly, let him live instantly, let him live forthwith, let him dance joyfully, let him run merrily. Move thou about within him both upwards and downwards; rest not quiet, doing nothing with him, but make him cool and comfortable, if thou findest that he is not guilty of sorcery."

The priest, or individual administering the poison, then refers to a number of crimes, of which the accused may or may not have been guilty, and which he the administrator can discover, and, consequently, does not, in reference to them, appeal to the test. The following are instances of these:—

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. There are many wicked and mischievous persons in the world; some who act mischievously and wickedly with regard to cattle, or sheep, or fowls, or houses, or furniture, or the staff of life, so as to rob, hurt, or injure them in any way,—I can judge, I remedy these, very well, O Raimanamango: but sorcery alone I wish to find out; therefore, mind only this, and forget not, O thou Raimanamango.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. There are many wicked people in the world; some who cheat and deceive in bargains; some who use false balances or false weights; some who shew respect of persons; some who have abundance, and yet seek for more, even with interest, to increase their riches. If such be not sorcery, I can remedy them; but only sorcery I wish to find out: therefore, mind this alone, and forget not, O thou, Raimanamango.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. Wickedness and malice are hanging overhead like the clouds; they do not depart from the earth, but are seen with the eyes; and the mouth is continually speaking evil, and persisting in it, — I can remedy this very well, but sorcery I wish to find out: therefore, mind this only, and forget not, O thou Raimanamango.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. There are many wicked people in the world. There are many who curse and swear, who say we despise and defy the Tangena. There are also such as return from a journey, having found no food; then they swore, pointed to the sun, but have forgotten to pay their vows. Now, take care that thou dost not search for these, for I can remedy them; but do thou search for sorcery alone: therefore mind only this, and forget not, O thou Raimanamango.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou, Raimanamango. There are many wicked people in the world. Some who scheme and devise mischievous things in their hearts; some who join with evil-doers to transgress; there are some also who borrow rice, and then will assert a lie that they have repaid it; some who borrow money and things of people, and will then swear that they have repaid and restored them, while they are conscious that they swear a lie: there are some also who have transgressed against father and mother, against friends and relations, yea, perhaps, he that is now opposite thee is such, viz., has cursed his friends, saying, in cursing them, 'I defy the judgment of the tangena.' There are also who throw stones at people, to hurt them, that beat them with sticks from a malicious disposition, and are guilty of many other crimes, of which he now before thee may be guilty. But search thou not in him for these crimes, nor for any other similar to these, which have not been named, but might be named; but search thou, and see if he be guilty of sorcery. Separate that only; for thou art god who comprehendest what is within man, and thou knowest who is guilty of sorcery, and who is not; thou art the test of the sovereign and people, and canst detect what escapes the sovereign and people; therefore, mind, O Raimanamango, to separate the guilty from the innocent; and I give thee, Raimanamango, only Vakintsaonjo, therefore take care, and look well for it.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. He is not one in imagination, nor one named by any person, he is not yonder in the field, nor out of town, nor separated by a partition, nor out of sight; but behold him, yea, his very self, sitting opposite thee. Now, if he has the root, or trunk, or branch, or the leaves of sorcery with him; and if he fetched any from persons, or if persons brought any from him, and that his heart was pleased with it, that his mouth consented with all hardness of heart to take it; that he flattered himself secure in having a favourable medicine, (bed); that if he flattered in an auspicious sikidy; that if he flattered being confident in some ody mahery, that can overcome the tangena, and destroy it, though he had actually the means of sorcery with which he killed people. Now, though he flatters himself secure while confiding in these, suffer not thyself, O Tangena, to be conquered by them, for thou art god: therefore, if he is a sorcerer, kill him quickly; kill him immediately, let him die forthwith, kill him without delay; burst him, and tear his flesh, and tear his arms into pieces; break his heart, burst his bowels. Oh, kill him instantly, kill him in a moment; for do not weary the sovereign and the people, neither keep them in suspense; for if he is guilty of sorcery, destroy him with thy fatal power.

"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. He is not one in imagination, nor yonder in the field, nor out of town, nor out of sight, nor separated by a partition; but behold him, yea, his very self, sitting opposite thee. Now, if thou findest that he has not the root, nor the trunk, nor the branch, nor the leaves of sorcery; and if he has not fetched it from persons, nor received any from persons; and if his heart was not pleased to do it, neither his mouth consented to it; and, again, if any have maliciously made the ody mahery, or any thing to injure him, or accuse him falsely, though he be not guilty of sorcery—thou art god, and will not allow any of the kind to overcome thee, and prevent thee to decide justly. Therefore, if he be innocent, let him live quickly; let him live immediately, let him live forthwith; preserve his life; move about quickly within him, both upwards and downwards; preserve his heart without delay; let him greatly rejoice, let him dance and run about merrily like one who has drank cold water; let him become like cold water, which is refreshing; let flesh return to him, if thou findest that he has no sorcery or witchcraft to kill persons with. Now, take care then, and forget not to return back through the same door through which I made thee to enter into him."

The above may be sufficient as a specimen of the form of "execration," or "exorcism," pronounced on the occasion. The whole is four or five times the length of the summary now given, but contains many repetitions, as well as a list of the offences of which the accused may or may not be guilty; urges that, if his offences are not heinous and capital, he may live; and that if otherwise, and especially if guilty of any kind of witchcraft, he may die terribly, and without delay.

At the conclusion of the formula, rice-water is given in copious draughts, till a decision is made for life or death, *by "vomiting" the three pieces of skin, or being found unable to do it. This* is the crisis;—*this* the circumstance which decides the character and the fate of the poor sufferer. And for the ejection of the three pieces, they watch earnestly, and carefully examine the contents of the fish-basket, already named. If they are found, it is announced he is not mamosavy,—if otherwise, he is declared mamosavy, and in this case is to be struck and beaten with the rice-pestle *till dead,* unless he has previously, as sometimes happens, died by the poisonous action of the tangena itself. During all this time, the relations and others around the house are praying, "May it not be your reproach,—may it not be your disgrace!—but if guilty, die; and if not, may you live!" The sikidy also continues to be worked, to ascertain if there be any thing to be rejected as evil, or if there be any counter-charm imperceptibly preventing the fair operation of the tangena. Sometimes the sikidy directs the relations to *pray*, for the accused has been guilty of something abominable, and therefore is "held," or they must reject the worn-out spade, or some kind of weed, as a faditra, or that they must pay some money. All its orders are promptly complied with.

Should the accused be pronounced guilty, the people outside the house are ordered to retire and go to their homes. And in such cases, even relations themselves appear anxious to disown any former connexion which had subsisted between them and the "bewitched." They then separate, and the corpse is dragged away from the house, wrapped in some old matting, with the head placed southward. Sometimes the body is hastily buried; but frequently is merely dragged to a distance from the house or village, and left for the dogs, or birds of prey.

It is extremely probable that many of the sufferers are buried alive; numbers toward the conclusion of the tragical scene are strangled or suffocated; the people on such occasions never waiting to finish effectually the dreadful work, but escaping from the house as soon as they imagine the spirit to be departing, lest they should come in contact with it in its flight. It is a fact, that the administrators can, and in the case of the slaves actually do, restore the individuals to animation; yet, on other occasions, the unfortunate creatures are either instantly tumbled into a grave, and covered with earth and stones, or they are left in the open air, a prey to the wild animals which are continually prowling about at night.

The numerous fabulous tales that obtain credit among the natives, of persons recovering after death, and appearing again after burial, &c., probably owe their origin to reanimations after the tangena. The natives make it very easy to account for such revivifications, without implicating the virtues of the tangena; since they ascribe all wonderful events to the influence of some appropriate charm; and imagine there is a charm or medicine of life, by the application of which, a person recovers even from death itself.

Many are purposely buried alive in Madagascar. An instance of this occurred near the house of one of the Missionaries: two men were digging the grave, whilst the victim was partly driven and partly dragged towards it; on reaching the brink, he was hurled in, and heavy stones dashed upon him, to deprive him of sensation before throwing in the soil.

After the body of the party pronounced guilty has been removed, a kind of abjuration is pronounced by the voanjo on the children of the deceased. Some water mixed with earth obtained from the grave of the king's father, is put into the rice-fan, while the voanjo, taking hold of a spear, says, "Ye children, if ye are mamosavy—if ye are of the same ody with him—if ye do evil as he has done;—if ye conceal the property, whether much or little, it is seen—seen clearly—then be ye accursed. O god, O heaven, and earth given to be inhabited! O moon, O sun, O morning, and O evening; O night for lying down, and day for rising up, O poor little lamb, O sacred herb, O all that is sacred by Andria-masina-valona, and the sacred portion to be drank, O all that is sacred by the twelve kings, O all that is sacred by Ikelamalaza, (here are repeated the names of all the principal idols;) O all that is sacred by the twelve hills, (naming the town Tananarivo, and eleven other principal towns,) and O this sacred water—if ye have done this, be accursed, be without progeny, be cast when ye litigate causes, be utterly destitute; let not that which is in the house be carried out, nor that which is without be taken in."

Each of the children drinks a little of the water in the rice-fan, and slightly moistens his head with it—the mode by which they are supposed to take a most solemn oath of their perfect innocence.

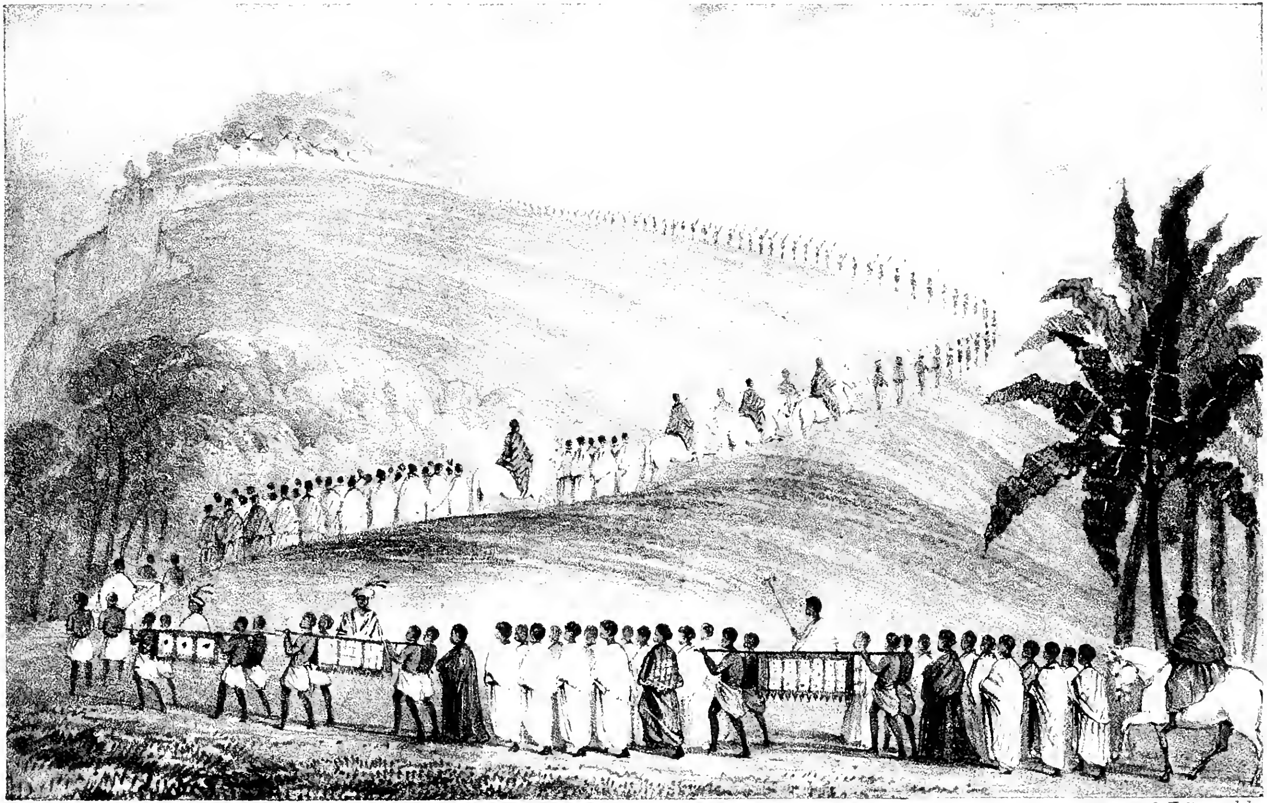
To complete the iniquity of the whole, and fill up the measure of the sufferings of the accused, as well as to satisfy the avarice of the accuser, the property of the mamosavy is all swept off, even down to the rice-measure; and the children must pay the voanjo fees of office.

Should the person who has drank the tangena be pronounced innocent, the three swallowed pieces of skin being found, he is directed to eat three spoonsful of sweetened rice. Should he, after this, unfortunately "be sick again," he is considered "bewitched;" if not, certain leaves and herbs are brought and cooked, which being finished, the "cursers" pronounce him madio, "clean." — "cleared by the king, by the judges, by the voanjo, and by the people; and ye who are his relations, take good care of him and nurse him."

The price of the tangena must next be paid for. The cursers are also paid one and one-eighth of a dollar. The people also pay three dollars to him who is pronounced "madio;" and the sikidy directs to what house he may be removed.

Should he die before the expiration of the twelfth day, he is considered as one allied to the mamosavy, and then it is said, his salutations have returned back upon him.

The sikidy appoints a day on which, should no fatal accident have happened to him, he may be taken home to his own house. His relations and friends assemble, form themselves into a procession, and accompany him home.



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Procession of Madu

They carry small wands in their hands, with a flower fixed at the top. All dress in their best robes, and wear whatever decorations or ornaments they can procure for the occasion. They sing as they advance, the females clapping their hands. The song consists simply of a repetition of the congratulatory expressions, "Come as the good, not lying; we are found innocent, without lying." This is continued, with occasional dancing, till the party reaches home. Then feasting commences; cattle are killed, and meat distributed. This is called the "Henandoza," "meat of the judgment or curse," and is forbidden to the guardians of the idols as profaning their sanctity.

Such are the general circumstances attending the custom, and from which it will be seen that the test is *not* whether the tangena proves fatal, but whether the three pieces of skin are ejected by it as an emetic. Many live, as will be shewn presently, who are yet pronounced "mamosavy," and treated as such. But it may not be unsuitable to add here an anecdote illustrative of the effects of the tangena when given alone, and when, according to customs on the *coast* of the island, it was exhibited (or pretended to be so) to *kill*, if the party were guilty. The case occurred at Tamatave in 1821.* Mr. Hastie, the British agent, had lost about thirty-three pieces of Pondicherry cloth. Two men were suspected, and one of them, who happened to be on the spot, was immediately apprehended. The chieftain, Jean René, proposed to administer the tangena,—at least in a sufficient quantity to extort a confession. The man, heavily ironed, was taken to a small tenement on the premises, whither an elderly person, and several attendants, came with the ordeal. The nut was put into a dish, and two knives ominously placed across each other, edgeways, upon the nut. The elderly person, who seemed to act as chief in the business, then discussed at length the divine qualities of the tangena, and offered a sort of prayer that its desired effects might be produced in the case in hand. "This," said he, "is given by god to men to be a test of actions. It is infallible in its decisions, and just in its effects. It is a cordial to the innocent, and death to the guilty." He then prayed to "Zanahary, lord of heaven and earth, the observer and judge of all actions, that he would cause the nut not to injure, if the man were innocent; but if guilty, that it might torment, pain, and kill him,—that every possible curse might overtake him, and his body become food for dogs and the birds of the air,—that his spirit after death might transmigrate from one beast to another, from a pig to a dog, from a dog to a cat, and from thence to the most venomous, voracious, and despicable creatures on earth."

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* The Rev. Dr. Griffiths was an eye-witness.

The suspected individual was asked if he had stolen the cloth; when, replying in the negative, the nut was scraped; and when about twenty grains of the powder were prepared, the man was again interrogated, "Guilty, or Not Guilty?" Persuasions were employed to induce confession; as these were vain, the powder was given him, mixed with water, and rice-water, in small draughts, for a length of time afterwards.* In about two hours the pains commenced, and increased with much violence. Though a stout, athletic man, and the quantity of the nut taken was small, its effects were excruciating. Amidst his tortures, he solicited medicines. These were denied, and he persisted in maintaining his innocence. His agonies were now extreme. His bowels, he said, were writhing as if in knots. His groans were awful. His eyes seemed ready to start from their sockets. His whole countenance assumed a terrific appearance, and his entire frame was convulsed with torture. His irons were taken off, and he confessed having stolen part of the property. His comrade was taken in the course of the evening, and threatened with a similar trial. The threat induced confession, and part of the cloth was returned. The chieftain next morning published a kabary, that if any persons were found guilty of concealing any of the stolen cloth, they should be reduced to slavery. In the course of the day nearly the whole was recovered, and the two thieves, though released from irons, were degraded into slaves.

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* No pieces of skin were given, that not being the custom on the coast.

In the lengthened form of the ceremonial attending all these cases, especially the part prior to the draught being actually taken, so as to encourage a confession, there is something analogous to the ceremonial of the ordeal by "bitter waters" among the Jews, mentioned in Numbers, ch. xxxi. ver. 11; though it must be confessed that the crime for which *that* ordeal was ordained among the Israelites would scarcely be deemed a sufficient reason for giving the tangena, by the Malagasy.*

The administration of the tangena prevails so extensively, and is so essentially connected with many of the customs and consuetudinary laws of the Malagasy, that a few additional points deserve specific notice.

The tangena is often given to all the slaves in a family in case of illness occurring to any member of the family. Some one is suspected of having caused the illness by means of witchcraft; and to find out the culprit, the ordeal is put in requisition. This is especially the case with members of the royal family,* the judges, and those of high rank and property. Sometimes fifty or a hundred slaves are compelled to drink it on these occasions, and of those perhaps one-tenth, on the average, fall victims, dying by the operation of the tangena as a poison, and as many more are perhaps proved to be guilty by not ejecting the three pieces of skin. With regard to the fate of the latter, a difference exists, arising out of the different situation of their owners. Should the slaves happen to belong to a member of the royal family, and are found guilty, they must die;—if the tangena do not kill them, the hand of violence must. But in other cases, though convicted, their lives are spared. Their owners usually send them to a distant market, and there sell them. This may in part arise from motives of humanity, but chiefly, perhaps, from the wish not to lose property, each slave being, perhaps, worth from twenty to forty dollars. In a word, free people, in all cases, if convicted, must die; slaves, in all cases, may be sold, excepting those attached to members of the royal family.

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* See Michaelis' Commentary on the Laws of Moses, 263d article.

Should the sovereign himself be ill, not only the slaves who wait on him, but all in personal attendance, are liable to be put to the same test. An instance in point occurred a few years ago. Radama was ill. A senior judge, devoutly attached to the tangena, and other national customs, required that all who attended the king should take the ordeal, and among them were Prince Rateffe, Verkey, and others. The prince replied, "Well, you also are coming to the king, and if I am required to drink it, you must." All accordingly drank it; and while the prince and others were proved innocent, the old judge was convicted by it, died almost immediately, his property was confiscated, and his house razed to the ground without delay. A tomb has been subsequently erected on the spot where his house stood, by the senior judge.

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* In 1822, about fifty female attendants of the king's second sister drank the tangena, in consequence of her being near the period of her confinement, and suspecting that she had been bewitched. It happened in this case (and it was a remarkable circumstance) none died. Query, Might not some secret orders have been given to administer a less quantity to each than usual?

The king had, however, himself reposed little or no confidence, of late years, in the ordeal. Various circumstances had demonstrated to him its futility. Among many instances of robbery, one man was suspected of having stolen a bullock. The tangena was given to two dogs, as representatives of the accuser and the accused. That of the latter died, and the man was accordingly declared guilty, and fined. A few days afterwards the bullock was found, and under circumstances which proved the accusation and the conviction had been false. The fine was, of course, returned, the man treated as an innocent sufferer, and the tangena lost a little of its credit for infallibility of decision.

Administering the ordeal to two dogs, as in the case just mentioned, is a very prevalent custom. Sometimes two fowls are employed instead of dogs. Fewer ceremonies are used in such instances, but the design is the same. Whichever party is represented by the dog or fowl that is proved resy, or "overcome," by the tangena, must submit to the same fine or award as though he had personally drank the tangena, and been convicted on its evidence.

After the dog has swallowed the tangena, the following invocation is used—"Hear, hear, hear, and hearken well, O thou Raimanamango. Thou art now within the stomach of the dog, which is the substitute of eyes, life, feet, hands, and ears, for the accused. The dog in whose stomach thou art is thus like him. If thou findest that the accused is not guilty, but is spitefully and maliciously accused, let this dog live quickly; let this dog, which is a substitute for the accused, which has feet and hands like him, live quickly; yea, let this dog, which is his substitute, live quickly; and return back through the same door through which thou hast entered into it, O Raimanamango. But if thou findest that the accused is truly guilty, kill this dog, whose eyes, life, feet, hands, &c. are his substitute, without delay kill it quickly—destroy it instantly—burst its heart—tear it and kill it immediately, O Raimanamango."

The property of those who are convicted by the test of being bewitched, is wholly confiscated. Part falls to the sovereign, part to the judges, part to the accusers and some others. As the accusers have an interest in the conviction, there is always a temptation with the unprincipled to form an accusation against a party, however innocent. At the time of a "general clearing," *i.e.*, when a whole town or district is required to submit to the test, a fine of three dollars is paid to the person who is proved innocent after drinking the ordeal. Having been falsely accused, and put to so severe a scrutiny, he is paid this fine as some kind of indemnification and acknowledgment. In this, however, he but resembles many other suitors at law, for his costs are greater than the amount given him by his verdict. Payment of fees to the cursers, to the mpisikidy, to the voanjo, beef on his successful exit, &c., amount to three times the fine paid him.

If, however, a *free* person be accused at any other than a time of "general clearing," and be proved innocent by the test, he receives a fine of twenty-nine and a half dollars from the accusing party. Here, as his expenses are not greater than in the former case, his verdict becomes a source of actual profit to him. But few would willingly court the risk of obtaining it.

In litigating and deciding cases before the judges, the tangena is often given to fowls or dogs, as representing plaintiff and defendant, and the verdict given according to the effect of the tangena. This mode is resorted to in different cases,—when evidence is deficient or intricate, or apparently equal between the two parties; a far more expeditious mode than is sometimes adopted in the courts of more civilized countries.

However much there may be in the practices of this ordeal from which an enlightened mind instinctively shrinks, as irrational and presumptuous, yet so strong is the conviction in the mind of the Malagasy of the unquestionable rectitude of its decisions, that many promptly challenge its being given them, and most earnestly solicit it, on any suspicion or intimation of their being mamosavy. Conscious of innocence, they demand the ordeal, fully confident that the verdict will be in their favour, and that thus they will stand pure in the eye of their family, their friends, and the people, and moreover obtain the fine which the false accuser must pay in. It becomes, therefore, a point of honour and interest with an accused person to demand the test. If he declined it, he would expose himself to a public suspicion of being conscious of guilt, and consequently afraid to submit to trial. He would then be watched the more narrowly; some actions would be misinterpreted, and at the next time of general accusation he would probably be compelled to take it; and then, at the best, if declared innocent, have a fine of only three instead of twenty-nine and a half dollars.

Some instances have occurred of persons refusing to drink when called on to do it. This is taken as an acknowledgment and demonstration of guilt. Any one acting so, belonging to a member of the royal family, would be immediately put to death. And even in ordinary cases, when the proper authorities have decided on giving the tangena, should the party refuse to drink it, he would fall a victim instantly.*

Occasionally confession is made by a guilty party when about to take the draught. His own evidence is accepted, and he is put to death on the spot. A case occurred not long ago, of a man, when in the act of taking the tangena, confessing, in plain terms, "I am a mpamosavy, 'a bewitched person.'" "What have you done?" asked the parties around him. "I have killed by poison some of my relations." "And why did you kill them?" "Because, being poor myself, I could never obtain any meat; and I knew that as, at their death, some would be distributed, I should then get a portion, and I killed them for the sake of the meat." He was at once put to death, on this melancholy confession of depravity. While such an instance demonstrates that cruelty dwells in the dark places of the earth, and that men may be "without natural affection," it has a powerful tendency to confirm the superstitious attachment of the Malagasy to this mode of judgment, since even the very dread of such a test extorted the confession of long-concealed turpitude.

The following instances, related by Mr. Hastie from his own personal knowledge, as occurring under his own observation, are sufficient evidence of the mockery of justice with which this scourge of a benighted people is administered:—

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* In 1829, a man having drank a small quantity, refused to drink the remainder. His brains were instantly dashed out by a blow struck him on the spot with a large pestle used in pounding rice.

A Hova man, named Laihova, who owed one of his neighbours some money, went into the Betsileo district, and stole a fine young lad, about thirteen years of age, whom he gave to the neighbour in payment of his debt. The lad happened to be the son of persons in easy circumstances, who were much afflicted at their loss; and who, besides sending servants around the country in search of their child, offered bribes to the diviners to direct them to where he was. All their endeavours proved fruitless; and having mourned the loss of their only son for nearly three months, the father, attendant upon the chieftain of his district, came to the capital, to do homage to the king on his return from a campaign. On this occasion the father accidentally met with his child; who, having heard of the arrival of some people from his own country, absconded from his new master, in the hope of falling in with them, and thus luckily met the individual he most wished to see. The thief was easily traced; but the declarations of the creditor were insufficient, and he demanded a trial by ordeal. Laihova, who was probably an adept in the art, drank the poison, and, suffering no serious consequences, was declared innocent. The creditor, who had received the lad unconscious of his situation and circumstances, having declined the potion, was pronounced guilty, although the boy attested his innocence; and he was obliged to pay two slaves, one of them his own child, on refusing the ordeal.

The Betsileo family had barely left the village on their return home, when the suffering creditor presented himself before Laihova, lamenting the situation to which he was reduced by his chicanery, and praying for his assistance in some way to effect the recovery of his child. The hardened Laihova was, however, deaf to all his entreaties; and, on his becoming urgent, repulsed him with a rebuke, saying " I paid you my debt, but you had not skill to retain it." Fortunately, however, there were witnesses to this assertion; and the business being brought to trial at the capital, justice was done to the injured, and the guilty Laihova was condemned to slavery.

The advocates for the use of the tangena would not, however, allow this instance to diminish the renown of the ordeal; and it was strongly asserted by them, that the error arose from the want of a due formality in administering the draught.

It was about the same period that a man, residing on the confines of the province of Vonizongo, lost a bullock, that was well known to his neighbours by the singular mark of a red body and a white head. Going in search of the animal along the skirts of a wood where he suspected it had strayed, he encountered a man laden with beef, which had the skin on, exactly resembling that of his own bullock. He immediately charged the man who had the beef with theft; and he not being able to give a satisfactory account of his burden, they mutually challenged each other, and the affair was submitted to the ordeal. The trial, in this instance, was made upon dogs; and the man who had been found with the beef was pronounced guilty, confiscated, and sold into slavery, as were also two of his sons, who had guaranteed their father's innocence.

A few days after this condemnation, the man who had lost the bullock met the person from whom it had been bought; when the vender, ignorant of what had occurred, asked the other why he was so careless about the bullock he had sold him; stating, that it had been more than a month amongst his herd. An acquaintance of the injured party being present, the bullock was restored, and the innocent sufferers emancipated.

On another occasion, Mr. Hastie was requested by the king to visit one of the officers' wives, who was at that time ill; but not feeling himself sufficiently skilful to administer relief in a case such as her's, he requested Mrs. Jeffery, the wife of the Missionary, to go in his stead. This request was complied with; and to a message of inquiry from the king, expressed her regret that a woman in her situation had not been better attended to; expressing her fears that she could not recover. Her predictions were but too well founded. The woman died in a few hours; and the king remarked to her relatives, that the people around her should have been more careful.

On the following day, the mother and sister of the deceased, her husband's mother, and two near relations, constituting all the family, involved in the deepest grief at their loss, requested permission to take the tangena, to prove their innocence of any intended neglect or maltreatment of the deceased, for there was every reason to believe they had sincerely loved and faithfully attended upon her, according to their limited knowledge. Radama told them there was no occasion for the ordeal, and that they were fools for proposing it, as out of five, some one would most likely suffer; but they all declared that the guilty alone could be injured, and repeated their request to be allowed to prove their innocence, stating that it was necessary for their characters that they should do so, or the world would consider them guilty.

The king finally permitted the ordeal to be resorted to; and the administerer of the potion having, as Radama expressed it, made the draught a little too bitter, every one of the five fell victims to this feeling of honour, and not a tear was shed for them.

Unquestionably the tangena is a scourge, and a terrible scourge, to the country—perhaps its direst: yet it would be no easy task to supersede it; and probably till knowledge more extensively pervades the country—till the nature and laws of evidence are better understood—till the value of truth and the sanctity of an oath are more generally felt—in short, till more moral and religious principle prevails,—till then, trial by ordeal will probably continue. There can be no doubt that the dread of detection by it is the one general and mighty restraint which checks a thousand deeds of darkness in their very germ, and which else would be fearlessly perpetrated. It is thus far a political engine, holding in awe a people who, their rulers imagine, can in their existing state be held under control only through the medium of terror, superstition, and force. Let them be enlightened, and such an engine will be no longer required; and when no longer required, it will no longer be practised. Of this, the genius of the Malagasy, if not the very constitution of the human mind, and of the system of human affairs at large, may be accepted as the pledge. Let the Malagasy learn a better and a fairer mode of judgment, and they will write "Obsolete" on their tangena, and their government will consign it to contempt and oblivion.

It is not the design of these suggestions to extenuate the enormity, nor to palliate the abominations, of a practice already denounced as the direst scourge of a land of many calamities; but to assign some reason why an enlightened and benevolent monarch did not, and could not, by one act of legislative authority, abolish it; and to demonstrate the importance of education to the country, were it only to aid in the melioration of its civil institutions. The evil deprecated is a *branch*—the axe must be laid to the *root*. That the case demands every consistent and persevering effort, is but too painfully obvious, from a moderate computation of the great numbers annually falling victims to this system of trial. It is supposed that about one-tenth of the population take the tangena in the course of their lives,—(some take it twice, three times, and even more,)—and out of one-tenth taking it, it is computed that on the average one-fifth die. And thus a fiftieth part of the population is carried off by this most formidable instrument of destruction; which, supposing it to be generally practised through the island, (and there is reason to believe that it, or something analogous to it, is,) gives not much below one hundred thousand persons in every successive generation as its victims!—upwards of three thousand a year, and most of these persons in the prime of life! The misery and distress introduced into families by the sudden and entire loss of all their property in cases of conviction for offences, many of which are purely imaginary, is another great, though comparatively smaller part of the enormous and overwhelming evil.

Reference having been made, in several parts of the account of the superstitions of the Malagasy, to the mamosavy, some brief but distinct account of it seems to be required. The root of the word is mosavy, and by this is meant "that which bewitches"—the essence of witchcraft, the abstract idea of whatever renders a person bewitched, whether it be some evil spirit, some malignant but invisible agency, some poison secretly conveyed in food—in short, the genius of witchcraft and sorcery. Mamosavy is the active verb to bewitch; and mpamosavy, the person capable of bewitching others. Yet the word is by no means confined to acts of sorcery, but applied, as appears from the curses denounced in the tangena, and the common usage of the expression, to any who are guilty of great offences. This proceeds on the fallacious supposition that no one could perpetrate such deeds, unless he were under the influence of some mosavy; that is, unless he were really bewitched.

It is obvious how incompatible such an opinion is with any just conception of the moral responsibility of men for their actions. And to this may be added the prevailing idea of the vintana or destiny. A man commits some flagrant offence—it may be murder—he is deemed mamosavy, and this is his misfortune. He had no control over himself. It was his destiny to act as he did.

The following instances related by Drury may serve to shew the degree of self-sacrificing devotion to which superstition may lead. A man with whom the narrator was acquainted had received in a dream, through the medium of an evil spirit, a command to wash his lamba the following morning. In obedience to this divine injunction, he went along with the party, of which Drury was one, to a stream of water, where he had no other business than to do as he had been commanded; and as he stooped down to wash his lamba, he was killed by a random shot from the enemy, who had watched the motions of the party, and who retreated without injuring any one else.

The other instance was that of a man who, having made his addresses to a demon, was told in a dream that his brother must shoot at him. His brother, however, endeavoured to dissuade him from the act, but he insisted that it must be done, or that worse would ensue. "Well then," said he, "I will shoot near you, but take care to miss you." "No," said the dreamer, "it must be executed without the least prevarication, for I am fully persuaded that the demon will defend me from all harm. At length he prevailed upon his brother, who, standing at the distance of about thirty yards, fired at his lower parts; but notwithstanding all his precaution, he broke a leg; and then blaming himself for his credulity in acting so contrary to his own judgment and feelings, he ran with tears in his eyes to the assistance of the wounded devotee. All the remedies prescribed by enchantment and superstition were applied, but though the wound was healed, the leg remained nearly useless for life.

Associated with the idea of the mpamosavy is that of the ody mahery—the powerful charm;* and to be found guilty of making it, or even having it in possession, is certain death; and death by a terrible mode of punishment, that of being bound hands and feet, hurled down the tremendous precipice of a steep rock, and there left to be devoured by dogs. Of what this fatal ody is composed, no one knows, or is willing to tell, as no one would subject himself to the supposition of knowing any thing about this black art. Probably, like many other potent spells in the country, it consists of nothing more than a few feathers, or a little earth and some bits of straw, sticks, or refuse of any kind; yet this is solemnly believed to be capable of effecting wonders of a most extensive and alarming character. A little of it buried in the ground, near a person's residence, would inevitably prove his ruin, destroy his property, and bewitch, perhaps, his whole family. To discover where it may be concealed, should there be suspicions of any, the idol Ramahavaly is sent for; and on the fees being paid to his keepers as a donation to the idol, the ody will be found. This idol is sometimes brought even within the court-yard of the monarch's palace for this purpose, under suspicion that some evil persons, worse than incendiaries, have entertained the horrible design of destroying the sovereign and the empire by such detestable means. It is commonly the case that some kind of refuse is found, or said to be found, and this is, of course, regarded as a detection of the spell, and proclaims the wonderful abilities of Ramahavaly, or the secret finder.

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* Sometimes called Fankatovana.

Happily, as a means of relieving the fears of the people, who might be always in danger of being bewitched, even when least aware of it, they are warned when the unsuspected calamity may be approaching them. This friendly office is performed by the sikidy, which ascertains that such or such a one is liable to be bewitched, and directs him what faditra he must offer to avert the impending evil. He thankfully accepts the warning, pays the fee for this prophetic intimation of ruin, offers the faditra, and feels himself secure from harm.

Thus a link of connexion is seen to exist between the sikidy, the ody, the tangena, and the idols, which, though not essentially allied in their own nature and influence, yet, by the customs of the island, support, and are dependent on, one another—and all sustain the same system of mental and moral delusion and degradation. The power that avails to destroy one branch of this system will infallibly involve the ruin of the whole. Let knowledge and true religion spread, enlightening and invigorating the mind, at the same time that the heart is elevated and sanctified, and the idols shall be utterly abolished, the tangena shall be superseded by rational evidence—the veneration for truth, by the oblivion of witchcraft—charms shall no longer possess the fictitious virtue produced by a disordered imagination—and the sikidy shall vanish before a simple reliance upon Divine Providence, and a devout disposition to leave that which is future and concealed with Him who bounds the sphere of human investigation, and who represses the pride, while he exposes the feebleness of curiosity, by proclaiming, "Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

APPENDIX.

General Observations on the Malagasy Language—Outline of Grammar, and Illustrations.

BY THE REV J. J. FREEMAN.

The language of Madagascar belongs unquestionably to the family, or class of languages frequently denominated Malayan, but to which the term Polynesian appears far more appropriate, and has accordingly been applied to it by Mr. Marsden, in the Introduction to his Malayan Grammar, 1812. The Missionaries in the South Sea Islands have long been accustomed to designate all those dialects found in the Polynesian countries, by the generic appellation " Polynesian."

The fact of some close and important mutual relation subsisting between the dialects spoken through a vast extent of intertropical country in the Eastern seas, had been remarked by Cook and other voyagers; and from the commercial and political ascendancy formerly held by the Malays in those parts, the name " Malayan" was accorded generally to those dialects which seemed to have sprung up, in some way, or at some period, from the Malay, as their common parent. A more extensive acquaintance with them, and a more careful comparison instituted between them, has led to the conclusion that these dialects are not to be regarded as descended from the Malay, but rather, as sustaining, according to the opinion expressed by Mr. Marsden,* the relation of sisterhood to it, and to each other.

The living Malay language now spoken, or the vernacular dialect in the Malayan Peninsula, and other parts of the Eastern Archipelago, is itself only related to the great and comprehensive Polynesian language, just as that of New Zealand, Tahiti, or Madagascar, may be related to it. The two most remarkable circumstances belonging to this Polynesian language are, the wide extent to which it has been carried, and the tenacity with which it has retained its own individual characteristics or idiosyncrasy, even in the contiguity of other more copious and cultivated languages, spoken by immensely larger numbers, such as the Arabic, Hindu, Chinese, and Indo-Chinese.

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* On the Polynesian or East Indian Languages, in Miscellaneous Works, by W. Marsden. 1834.

With regard to the extent of region over which it has traversed, and still prevails, it is scarcely needful to do more, in these remarks, than just to glance at the fact, that from Madagascar in the west, to Easter Island in the east, embracing more than half the circumference of the globe at the equator, and from the Sandwich Islands in the north, to the extremity of New Zealand in the south, being 4,000 miles of latitude, "there is a manifest connexion between many of the words by which the inhabitants of these islands express their simple perceptions, and in some instances of places the most remote from each other, a striking affinity; insomuch, that we may pronounce the various dialects, in a collective sense, to form substantially one great language."* "One original language," observes Sir Stamford Raffles, "seems in a very remote period to have pervaded the whole (Indian) Archipelago, and to have spread, (perhaps with the population,) towards Madagascar on one side, and the islands of the South Sea on the other." On this subject, it may not be uninteresting to add the valuable opinion of the celebrated linguist, Baron Humboldt, brother to the illustrious traveller, as expressed by himself in a letter to the writer of this paper, dated Berlin, 14th of June, 1834, "There is no doubt that the Malagasy belongs to the family of the Malayan languages, and bears the greatest affinity to the languages spoken in Java, Sumatra, and the whole Indian Archipelago. But it remains entirely enigmatical in what manner, and in what period, this Malayan population has made its way to Madagascar. Of Sanscrit words there is a certain number in the Malagasy language."

This latter observation of Baron Humboldt corresponds with the remark of Sir Stamford Raffles in his History of Java, that "in proportion as we find any of these tribes, (viz. from Madagascar to the South Seas,) more highly advanced in the arts of civil life than others, in nearly the same proportion do we find the language enriched by a corresponding accession of Sanscrit terms, directing us at once to the source whence civilization flowed towards these regions."

The origin of this one great language is veiled in impenetrable obscurity; nor are there any existing data on which to build satisfactory conclusions respecting the era when, or the circumstances under which, it obtained so wide a dissemination. "An attempt to ascertain which of the Polynesian dialects should be considered as the parent stock, from whence the others branched out, (a pre-eminence that some have been inclined to claim for Java,) must prove, I apprehend, as fruitless as would be that of determining which of the Teutonic dialects gave birth to the others. To this, their subsequent degree of improvement has no direct relation. An equally unsuccessful endeavour has hitherto been, that of tracing their common descent from some one of the nearest continents; and we must be content to regard the language as original, in the ordinary sense of the expression, implying no more than its origin being in that state of obscurity, beyond which no connecting line or derivation can be traced."*

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* Marsden, ut supra, page 3.

The degree of relation, if any, subsisting between this great insular language, and the languages of the South American continent, has not, perhaps, been very carefully examined. "Not the slightest affinity appears between them," says Mr. Marsden in an early part of the work above quoted. And on referring to specimens of the Araucanian of Chili, and the Kichuan of Peru, he remarks, that neither of these, (which are totally different from each other,) has even the most remote affinity to the Polynesian. Subsequently to this, Mr. M. appears to have been rather shaken in his confidence on this particular point, by conversation with Mr. Ellis, who, in his appendix to his Tour through Hawaii, had remarked, (page 471,) "Some of the words of South America, in their simplicity of construction and vowel terminations, as Peru, Quito, pronounced *Kito,* Parana, Oronoko, &c. appear like Polynesian words."

A similar observation may be applied to the eastern coast of Africa, as compared with the western coast of Madagascar. It is impossible to look over a map, and not perceive the obvious similarity between the names of the districts and rivers of these two countries severally; such, for example as, Masambika, Sambesy, Zimba, Kilimany, Inhambany, Manisa, &c., on the side of Africa, which have not only a perfect resemblance to Malagasy names, but are either Malagasy roots variously combined, or actual words in the Malagasy language. Hence it may not be extravagant to express an opinion, that the great Polynesian language has extended its powerful influence even into the two remote continents of Africa on the west, and South America on the east.

It may not be out of place to remark here, in reference to all comparisons between words and names, in different dialects and languages, that the differences are frequently rather apparent than real, arising out of the want of a uniform standard of orthography, and the consequent arbitrary methods writers are obliged to employ. The same word as addressed to the *ear,* often assumes quite a different garb when presented to the eye, by two different writers; *e.g.*

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* Marsden, ut supra, page 5.

Quilimane, ...	Kilimany,
Mosambique, . . .	Masambika.

Of all the dialects belonging to the Polynesian family, it forms an interesting topic of inquiry, To which that of Madagascar is most nearly related. Is it to the *Malayan* properly so called? the Javanese? as thought by some: the Nias? as suggested by Mr. Marsden, or some other?

The writer of the present sketch once thought, (taking Crawford's Indian Archipelago as his guide,) that the nearest relation of all might be traced between the Bali and the Malagasy, but he has subsequently found reason to relinquish this in favour of the Malayan, nor is he induced to change his opinion in behalf of the Nias, as intimated by Mr. Marsden. It may illustrate these remarks, to select from the extensive vocabulary of that gentleman a comparative view, consisting of Mr. M.'s thirty-four words, of the Malagasy, (according to the orthography now established there,) the Malayan, the Javanese, the Nias, and the Bali, with the Tahitian by Mr. Ellis.

ENGLISH.	MALAGASY.	MALAYAN.	JAVANESE. Crawford.	NIAS.	BALI.	TAHITIAN.
One	isa	satu, sa	sa, siji	sara	sa	hoe
Two	roa	dua	loro	dua	dua	erua
Three	telo	tiga	talu	tulu	tulu, telo	etoru
Four	efatra	ampat	papat	ufa	hampat	emaha
Five	dimy	lima	limo	lima	lima	erima
Six	enina	anam	nanam	nnu, ano	hanam	eono
Seven	fito	tujuh	pitu	fitu	pitu	ehitu
Eight	valo	dilapan	wolu	walu	kutua	evaru
Nine	sivy	sambilan	songo	suva	sia	eiva
Ten	folo	sa-puluh	puluh	fulu	dasa	ahuru
Man	olona	orang	wong	niha	manusa, wong	taata
Head	loha	kapala, ulu	andas	hugu	sirah	upoo
Eyes	maso	mata	moto	mata	mata	mata
Nose	orona	idong	irung	ighu	churg'ut	ihu
Hair	volona	rambut, buluh		bu	bulu	rouru
Teeth	nify	gigi	unto	ifu	gigi	niho
Hand	tanana	tangan	tangan	tanga	tanjan	rima
Blood	ra	darah	gateh	doh	rah, getih	toto
Day	andro	ari, hari		luoh	cina	mahana
Night	alina	malam		bungi	patang	arui
Dead	maty	mati	mati	mate'	mati	mate
White	fotsy	putih	puteh	afusi	putih	uouo
Black	mainty	itam	irany	aitu	slam	ereere
Fire	afo	api	gani	alitu	api	uuahi
Water	rano	ayer	banvu	idano	yeh	vai
Earth	tany	tanah	la-ah	tanu	tanah	aina
Stone	vato	batu	watu	batu	batu, watu	ofai
Swine	kisoa	babi	chilang	bavi	chelen	buaa
Bird	vorona	burong	manuk	fofo	kedis	manu
Egg	atody	telur	andoy	adulu	taluh	huero
Fish	hazandrano	ikan	irvah	ia	bahanier	ia
Sun	maso-andro	mata-ari	srang-nge-nge	luoh	mata-nabi	ra
Moon	volana	bulan	wulun	bawa	bulan	marama
Stars	kintana	bintang	lintang	dufi	vintany	fetia

N.B. The letter *o* in the Malagasy words is sounded like *oo* in the word poor; and the letter *n*, is, on the coast, sounded as *gn*. Final vowels are scarcely heard.

The view of the language now given, as to its relationship to the Malay, is not, however, founded on the mere accidental circumstance, that some words are found common to the Malay and the Malagasy, but on a general comparison of the genius and structure of the two languages. That many words are obviously common to the two languages, may be seen by a cursory examination of Marsden's Malayan Dictionary, and any Malagasy Vocabulary,* or by an inspection of Crawford's Indian Archipelago.† Yet it is possible these words may have arisen out of circumstances not essentially connected with the origin of the language—although their number seems to render such a supposition almost incredible.

But a similar grammatical structure between two languages, can never be satisfactorily explained, without reference to a common origin. And of this common origin, the grammars of the two languages under review, afford more decisive evidence than their respective vocabularies. In truth, as it has been

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* A Malagasy Dictionary in two parts, English, and Malagasy, by the Rev. J. J. Freeman, and Malagasy and English, by the Rev. D. Johns, has been published, and may be obtained at Messrs. Fisher & Jackson's, 38, Newgate-street; and Black and Armstrong, Tavistock-street.

† In illustration of the verbal affinity between these two languages, the following examples may be adduced:

MALAGASY.	MALAY.	ENGLISH.
toaka	tuwak	toddy, any intoxicating [liquor
manása	asa, mengasah	to whet, sharpen
anaka, zanaka	anaka	a child
masaka	masak	ripe
alona	alun	a wave
ompa	ompat	calumny
ova	ubah	change
ovy	ubi	edible roots, yams
tahotra	takout	fear
olitra	ulat	a worm
iny	ini	this
vono	bunoh	killing
voa	buah	fruit
bitsika	bisik	whisper
tady	tali	rope
taona	taun	year
lanitra	lang'it	sky
tany fotsy	tanah putih	chalk
fasika or fasina	fasir	sand
arina	arang	charcoal
rivotra	ribut	wind
helatra	kilut	lightning
taolana	tulang	bone
hoditra	kulit	skin
tomotra	tumit	heel
aty	ati	liver
nana	nanah	pus
nosy	nusa (Javan)	island

justly remarked by the eminent linguist already mentioned, in his Letter on the subject of the Affinities of Oriental Languages, addressed to Sir Alexander Johnston; "All research into the affinity of languages, which does not enter quite as much into the examination of the grammatical system as that of words, is faulty and imperfect; the proofs of the real affinity of languages, that is to say, the question, whether two languages belong to the same family, ought to be principally deduced from the grammatical system, and can be deduced from that alone, since the identity of words only proves a resemblance such as may be purely historical and accidental."

It may be sufficient to name, as general analogies applying to the two languages under consideration—the want of declensions to indicate gender, number, and case, and the use of appropriate words for that purpose,—the postfixing pronouns to nouns by a change in their form, especially denoting possession,—forming verbs from roots by prefixing particles, the *same* particles to a great extent in the two cases, or rather, the same particle modified gratiâ euphoniæ, as *me*, *men*, *mem*, *meng*, in Malay, and *mi*, *man*, *mam*, *mang*, in Malagasy; the changes of initial consonants to coalesce with the said prefixes;* the formation of the participle of agency by the use of a prefix, in Malay, *pen*, in Malagasy, *mpan*, (the *m* being but softly sounded;) the addition of an enclitic termination to a participle of action, *an* in Malay, *ana* in Malagasy, (final *a* nearly quiescent;) the formation of a passive voice by an inseparable particle, as in Malay, *ter-bunoh* killed, Malagasy, *voa-vono* killed; placing the adjective before the noun; besides various striking coincidences in the manner of forming derivative nouns and adjectives, and of the ordinal numbers from the cardinal, where it may be remarked, that the former, as well as the names of the days of the week, are nearly the same in the two languages.

These circumstances, it is thought, are quite sufficient to establish the proof of the *general identity of origin* of the two languages; or, certainly, their *intimate relation* to each other.

It will be obvious, however, from a cursory perusal of the grammar, that the inflections of a Malagasy verb are far more numerous and subtle than those of the Malay, especially in its abundant use of the causative and reciprocal forms of verbs.

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* Thus in Malay, toulong becomes menoulong
— Malagasy, tapaka ——— manapaka
— Malay, palou ——— memalou
— Malagasy, potraka ——— mamotraka
— Malay, bunoh ——— membunoh, or mamounoh
— Malagasy, vono ——— mamono
— Malay, siram ——— meniiram
— Malagasy, sasaka ——— manasaka
— Malay, kata ——— mengata
— Malagasy, kidihidy——— mangidihidy

A considerable number of Arabic words are also found in the Malagasy language. Some of these, it is probable, may have been introduced through the medium of the Malay, as such words appear common to the three languages, Arabic, Malay, and Malagasy, with slight modifications in the two latter, corresponding with the affinities of the two languages respectively. Other Arabic words, it is highly probable, have been imported from time immemorial by the Arabs, who have for centuries visited the island for purposes of trade and commerce. These words are chiefly found in the names of the days of the week, and of the months, and in the operations of the sikidy, i. e. divination. These are mere accidental circumstances, and do not affect the structure or genius of the language.

The Malagasy seems to bear no relation to the Mosambique, nor to the Caffre languages of Africa. There are many natives of Mosambique in the island; but so perfectly dissimilar is their language from that of the Malagasy, that they can hold no mutual conversation with the natives of Madagascar till they have acquired the language of the latter.

The whole island of Madagascar may be said to possess but "one language." Varieties of dialect exist, but these are neither so numerous nor so strongly marked, that natives resident in different parts of the island find much difficulty in conversing with one another. The great features of the language, its genius, its construction, and its roots, are everywhere the same. Occasional words exist in some parts of the country that do not exist in other parts; and in some, but comparatively few instances, the same word has different significations in some two or three different parts of the island.

It is observable, that the dialects found along the whole coast of the island more nearly resemble one another than any one of them can be found to resemble that of the *Hovas*, that is to say, of the natives occupying the interior, or rather the central part of the island, called Imerina. And hence it may not be unsuitable to regard the whole Malagasy language as embracing two divisions—the maritime, and the central; or, if the supposition be correct that the Hovas are a people of later introduction to the island than the rest of its inhabitants, the two divisions already mentioned may be considered as embracing the language of the aborigines, (on the coast,)—and that of the conquerors, (subsequently naturalized,) but which is now nearly amalgamated with the former.

The principal varieties found in a comparison instituted between the above divisions, relate more to pronunciation and a few changes of letters, than to any radical changes in the words themselves, or in the structure of the sentences. The letter *l*, for example, is frequently used on the coast where *d* is employed in Imerina, as in *oly*, a charm; in Imerina, it is *ody*. The terminational *tz* on the coast is expressed by *tr* or *tra* in the interior. The letter *n* in the interior, assumes the nasal sound of *ng* or *ngn* on the coast; as, *manana* of the former would be enunciated *mangnana* by the latter.

Few and simple as these varieties may seem, yet, added to the introduction of some new words, and a few others used in a peculiar and altered sense, they render it somewhat difficult to a foreigner, familiar with one of the above divisions only, to comprehend readily, or to converse fluently in, the other; and even natives themselves require a little practice in such cases, before they can easily sustain a conversation with their fellow-countrymen.

The outlines of the Grammar which accompany these pages refer more particularly to what is termed the Hova* dialect, though, from what has been already remarked, they may be applied very generally to the language of the whole island. In truth, all *general* remarks on the Malagasy language must have this universality of application, since there is nothing so peculiar, so characteristic of any one portion of it, as to limit and restrict the observation to one section more than to another. Describe the genius of the Hova dialect, and you describe the genius of the Malagasy language on the broad scale. Exhibit the leading features of the Malagasy language, without particular reference to any one section of the country, and you include all that you would wish to state, of a general kind, respecting the Hova dialect. But descend to minutiæ, and you then have to exhibit the verbal peculiarities, and terms, and enunciation found in the great divisions of the island respectively.

From all this, two things are obvious, which, in the infant state of society in Madagascar, are of no small importance. First, That a person who has acquired the language used in any one part of the island, will find little difficulty in travelling over all the rest, so far as intercourse with the natives is concerned: and, secondly, That books printed in either dialect may be read by natives residing where the other dialect is used, allowing each to retain his own mode of pronouncing letters, particularly that already noticed, of the interchange between *n* and

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* Hova is the name of the people; Imerina is the name of the district they occupy, or, as embracing a somewhat larger territory, An-Kova, the Hova country, (*h* being changed into *k* after *n*.)

ngn; and another, which may be here added, namely, that *o*, which among the Hovas is long, and sounded as *oo* in *hoop*, is usually short and hard, as *o* in *hot*, among those we have placed under the maritime division.

The Malagasy language contains much philosophical precision, and is capable of great force and beauty of expression. Its structure is simple and easy, yet admits considerable variety, combined with elegance in the character of its sentences. Although deficient in abstract terms, it possesses such an admirable flexibility, founded on fixed principles and laws of analogy, that little difficulty can be experienced in communicating any new ideas to the minds of the natives. In some cases, there appears to be a redundancy of expressions; objects with which the natives are daily familiar admit various appellations, containing, however, but slight shades of variety in their signification; and hence distinctions are drawn out in the descriptive name of objects, that to a foreigner appear of too little value or importance to merit such careful distinctions: e. g. the horns of a bullock have probably twenty different names to describe their mode of growth—whether inclining inward or outward, up or down, straight or crooked, &c. And so also the plaiting of the hair of the natives admits of probably about thirty different names, descriptive of the kind, and size, and mode, and union, &c. of the plaits made. This redundancy of expression in unimportant circumstances does not, however, appear peculiar to the Malagasy language, but seems common to all the Eastern languages.

The Malagasy language admits a vast variety of combinations of words, so as to form *compound words*, giving much terseness and energy to the modes of expression employed. Many of these contain allusions to the peculiar customs and manners of the people, without a familiar acquaintance with which it is extremely difficult to recognize the precise ideas conveyed by these compound words.

The want of a substantive verb, corresponding with the *esse* of the Latins, and to be employed in the same manner, is compensated in many cases by a mode of structure which prevails extensively in the Malagasy langnage, and which constitutes one of its marked peculiarities; namely, that of making adverbs and prepositions susceptible of tense, or time, by distinguishing the past from the present.

The copiousness of the language consists not merely in its stock of words, but in its facility of forming numerous derivatives, agreeably to fixed rules, from one simple root, which derivatives convey all the shades of variety of meaning, which in many other languages would be expressed by some adjuncst, adverbs, or even a periphrasis: e. g. *mody*, is, "to go home,"—*tampody*, "to go out, and return home the same day."

It is not intended, in the following remarks on the grammar of the Malagasy language, to institute any further comparison between it and any other language, Oriental or Occidental. Nor are the following pages presented as containing a complete Malagasy grammar, which does not properly belong to a work professing to be only a history of the country; besides which, the strictly philological character of a grammar would prevent its being sufficiently acceptable or interesting to the general reader, to justify its insertion here.

A few only of the leading features and more striking peculiarities will be pointed out, following the arrangements usually observed in the Western grammars, merely premising, that the natives themselves, having had no *written* language till it was introduced lately among them by their Missionary instructors, had, of course, no grammar of their language. To the latter they are indebted for an exhibition of the *rules* on which the structure of their language is built.

The first inquiry respects the *roots* employed in the language, and, with regard to these, the following observations may illustrate these characters—

1. Very many words exist in the language which are obviously compound, and can easily be traced to their respective component parts; and the changes they undergo in the composition of one word satisfactorily accounted for.

2. Many other words exist, which are strictly the *roots* with a few affixes, to give them their verbal or nominal signification.

3. Other words exist in their own proper form as roots, and cannot be traced to *any* simpler form whatever; as *vaky*, split; *tery*, pressed; *voly*, planted; *reny*, mother.

4. In some instances, the primitive root appears to have become obsolete, or to be altogether lost, while its derivatives remain in use extensively.

5. The root usually consists of two syllables—frequently of three: in some cases of one only; and in some few instances of four, or even more.

6. The root may generally be known by its being destitute of all those affixes and postfixes which will be pointed out under the chapters on nouns and verbs.

7. Roots may perhaps be found in all the various parts of speech; but usually they consist of nouns or passive participles; as, *mofo*, bread; and *tery*, pressed. Some few roots appear to exist both as nouns and participles.

8. Those roots which admit the principal verbal inflections are generally passive participles—*vidy*, bought; *hita*, seen; *laza*, spoken; *re*, heard; *lany*, expended.

9. A root may generally be known by its admitting the particle "*voa*" immediately before it. For though many cases

exist in which *voa* cannot be used, the word *must* be a root before which it *can* be used. Hence, wherever *voa* immediately precedes a word, that word is both a root and a passive participle—*voa voly,* planted; *voa jinza,* cut down; *voa vaky,* broken; *voa dio,* cleansed.

10. Where *voa* is prefixed to a root, that root is usually of the nature of a passive participle belonging to a verb active and transitive. Where the verb is of a neutral or intransitive nature, the *voa* is seldom used—*sasatra aho,* I am wearied. Or, as an example of the same word occurring in two senses, and forming the one an active and the other a neutral verb: *tory.*

Voa tory ko—proclaimed by me,	mitory—I proclaim.
tory izy—sleeping is he,	matory—to be asleep.

11. Some roots are nouns, and do not form verbs, excepting those which belong to the fourth class of verbs, in *maha,* a particle of the most extensive use in the whole language.

12. Nearly all the roots in the language, and the words derived from them, admit of a reduplicated form, which is sometimes intensive, and sometimes diminutive. Except that this form so frequently diminishes the strength of the signification, it might be thought to resemble the pihel of the Hebrew. *Mangotraka,* to boil; *mangotrakotraka,* to boil vehemently. This form is synonymous with *mangotraka dia mangotraka.*

13. Roots can generally be traced by rejecting the prefix and postfix formatives and affix pronouns. The pronouns can be ascertained at a glance: they are few, and can be acquired by a little attention to the rules on pronouns. The other affixes and prefixes are explained with the nouns and verbs, as *mi. man,* &c., and *ana* as the participial termination. Thus, by way of an example or two,

Mampifaly—*mampi* is a regular verbal prefix: *faly* is the root.

Nifaliako—*ko* is an affix pronoun; *a* preceding it belongs to *ana, na* being cut off, when the affix follows, *ni* is a participial prefix, past tense. *Fali* alone is left; *i* and *y* are one letter, *i* being used in the middle of words. Hence *faly* is the root.

Fahafinaretana—*faha* is a prefix forming nouns; *ana* a participial termination used in nouns, changed from *tra*; *e* lengthened from *i*. *Finaritra,* happy; noun, happiness.

Fandrenesana—participial form of a noun—verb *mandrenesa* in the imperative: (changing *f* into *m* gives the verbal form:) the simple form in the indicative is *mandre; man* is the active prefix—*d* is inserted before *r*; *re,* heard, is the root.

These remarks respect the roots of the language generally: as to the uses of the *roots of verbs* alone, they properly belong to that chapter of a grammar which embraces verbs.

ON THE ALPHABET.

The Roman character has been introduced, and is found perfectly adequate to express, with simplicity and perspicuity, all the sounds in the language. The English alphabet has been adopted, omitting C, Q, U, W, X, and altering the power of J, by pronouncing it as dz. The vowels are pronounced as in French. C is expressed either by s or k; Q, by ko; U, by the letters io, pronounced rapidly, and almost as a diphthong W and X have no corresponding sounds in the language.

Should the above letters occur in foreign names introduced into the Malagasy language, others of an equivalent power are employed to express them, by which process they become, if not agreeable to the eye of an European, yet euphonic in the ear of a native: as, for Cæsar, Kaisara; Quince, Kiontsy; Ulysses, Iolisisy; Watts, Oatsy; and Maximilian, Makisimíliána.

CHANGES OF LETTERS.

Numerous changes of letters (consonants) take place, gratiâ euphoniæ, e. g.

f	changes	into	p	after	m	
h	—	—	k	—	n	and sometimes into g
l	—	—	d	—	n	
t	—	—	d	—	n	
v	—	—	b	—	m	
v	—	—	d	—	n	
z	—	—	j	—	n	

nr assumes *d*, and becomes *ndr*, and *t* is inserted after *n* before *s*, as in sivy (intsivy) nine times; azon-t-sampona, hindered: *a* final is frequently changed into *y*, when in regimine; and then the article *ny* may with propriety be omitted before proper names, but not in other cases; as,

Ny vokatra . becomes ny vokatry ny vavany
Ny molotra —— ny molotry ny olona
Andriamanitra —— Andriamanitry i Abirahama.

ON SYLLABIFICATION.

Excepting in the cases above specified, where certain consonants can follow each other, every consonant must be succeeded by a vowel. Hence the syllables usually consist of a consonant and a vowel, and a vowel must always terminate the syllable. Hence every termination in the language is a vowel, and generally *a* or *y*. At the end of words, these for the most part are sounded very softly; as in Manitra, Soratra, the final *a* is scarcely heard; and in a rapid pronunciation, each word would seem to consist of but two syllables. It adds, however, to the harmony, and tends to preserve the analogy of the language, to retain these terminations, especially as they account for some changes made when formed into compound words. This constant use of the vowels gives a peculiar softness and delicacy to the modulation and tones of the language.

On the Articles.

The Malagasy language possesses, properly speaking, but one article, *ny*. This is, however, subject to a few variations; but does not admit of inflexions; *ny* is placed equally before nouns in the direct and the indirect cases.

It is used in general before all nouns, singular and plural, and of whatever gender: as, *ny trano,* the house; *ny biby,* the cattle; *ny ankizy*, the servants.

It has always a definite signification. Nouns without the article are taken in an indefinite sense: *vary*, rice; *olona*, a human being, or people; *rano,* water; *tany*, country; *voankazo*, seeds.

Lei, ley, lehi, seem to have, in some cases, as when forming proper names, merely the force of the article, and used instead of *ra*, as, Lehifotsy, Lehisoa; but, as in most other instances they retain the signification of demonstrative pronouns, they will be found placed under the chapter on pronouns. *Lehi* sometimes interchanges with *ra*, as, Radama, or Lehidama.

In proper names of persons, *ra* is the usual prefix, and may be regarded as the article used in the composition of proper names; but there would be no violation of any grammatical law in viewing it merely as a particle. It is sometimes changed into *ran,* or *ram,* as the succeeding letter may require. Or in poetry, it is frequently changed into *re*, *ry*, *ray*, *rey*; these appear to retain simply the force of the article *ny*.

Instead of *ra,* the letter *I* is often used as the prefix to proper names of persons, and sometimes they interchange, so that either may be used; thus it may be said, either

Ra-kelimalaza, or I-kelimalaza.
Ra-fantaka, or I-fantaka.

The common prefix to names of places is *an,*[*] though, it should be remarked, that this is not employed as a separate and distinct prefix which can be omitted, but which enters into the essential composition of the name itself, as may be seen in the following examples:

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[*] Changed into *m* before *b*.

An-kadi-vori-be,—(name of a village south-west of the capital,) if analysed, is, *an,* the; *kady* (*h* changed into *k* after *n*) for *hady*, ditch; *vory*, round; *be*, many: i. e. the place of numerous fosses.

Am-bohi-be-maso-andro,—*am*, the; *bohi*, from *vohitra*, *tra* cut off in composition, and *v* changed into *b*, for the sake of sound; *be*, much; *maso andro*, sun: i. e. the village of much sun; i. e. open to the sky, unsheltered by trees, &c.

Am-bohi-polo-alina,—the village of ten myriads.

Angavo,—*an*, the; *avo*, high; *g* inserted for the sake of sound, or the native nasal sound of *n* on the coast.

An-tananarivo,—the town of a thousand.

ON NOUNS.

The distinction of gender can only be made by the addition of the word *lahy* for male, and *vavy* for female.

The distinction of number can only be made by the addition of some word that defines the meaning intended, as the ordinal numbers, the adjectives few, many, &c.

The distinction of case is made partly by the use of prepositions, and partly by the position of the words, as, *Vonoiny ny saka ny totozy,* the cat killed the mouse; literally, was killed by it, the cat, the mouse: *totozy*, mouse, is in the nominative case; the agent to the passive verb is here *saka*, which must always immediately follow its verb.

The nouns themselves therefore undergo no inflexions. Nouns are roots, derivatives, or compounds. Some are roots, as *lanitra*, the sky; *rivotra*, wind; *mofo*, bread. Most nouns are, however, derivatives, either from verbs or adjectives. The signification of those derived from verbs corresponds with the signification of the conjugation, or particular part of the verb from whence the derivation is taken. Thus, *soratra,* a writing, forms the verb *manoratra*; the participial noun of this is *fanoratra*, the mode of writing, (as whether from left to right, or from right to left;) the noun of the agent is *mpanoratra,* a writer; the passive participial form is *fanoratana*, the instrument of writing, as the pen, the desk, &c.: *anatra*, instruction; *mianatra*, to learn; *fianarana*, means of instruction, book, copy, lesson, &c.; *mpianatra,* a scholar; *mpampianatra*, one causing to learn, i.e. a teacher. *Aro*, defence; *fiarovana*, means of defence, weapons, &c.; *dera*, praise; *midera*, to praise; *fiderana*, means of praise, a hymn, &c.: *rafitra*, construction, build; *mandrafitra*, to build; *fandrafetana*, tools, implements used in building.

Of abstract nouns, comparatively few exist in the language. Many, however, are formed by merely prefixing *ha* to the adjective of quality: e.g.

maro—many, much; hamaro—abundance.
fotsy—white; hafotsy—whiteness.
maitso—green; hamaitso—greenness.

In the above, and in many similar cases, the adjective is a root in the language; but if, as it frequently occurs, the adjective itself is compounded of a root and a formative prefix, the *ha* cannot again precede that, without also changing the termination, and making a concrete noun of a participial form: e.g.

aizina—darkness; maizina—dark.
ha-maizin-ána—darkness; (i. e. of some particular time, place, or circumstance, mentioned or understood.)
zava—light, made to be light by some one.
mazava—clear, light, being in that state.
hazavana—light, (sub.) admits *ny*.

To this class of nouns may be added those formed by *faha* prefixed to the root; these are, however usually concrete, and very frequently of a generic character; as, instead of *ny hazavana*, the lightness, *ny fahazavana,* the means of light and illumination, as the sun, moon, a candle, &c. This *faha* bears a relation to the *maha,* a prefix forming verbs, and will be found noticed in its place. It does not always imply cause or means, as in the above instance; as in

fahatezerana—anger; from tezitra—angry.
faharetana—endurance; from maharitra—to endure.

The distinction is often nicely drawn between nouns in *ha* and those in *faha*, but the distinction constitutes one of the excellencies, and is strictly a philosophical excellency of the language; thus

ratsy—bad; haratsiana—badness, wickedness in the abstract.
faharatsiana—the act, the commission of wickedness.
tsara—good; hatsarana—goodness in the abstract.
fahatsarana—goodness in active operation.

e.g. hatsarana, is a quality or perfection in God—his essential goodness.
ny fahatsarany, is his goodness in action—the goodness he bestows, the benevolence he displays.

On Adjectives.

Adjectives are not very numerous. The want of them forms one of the most serious deficiencies in the language. They admit of no inflexions whatever, of gender, number, or case.

Some adjectives are roots in the language, as, *tsara*, good; *ratsy*, bad; *tonta*, old.

Many adjectives are formed by affixing *ma* to the roots; as, from

loto comes maloto, dirty
tavy —— matavy, fat
hery —— mahery, strong,
ditra —— maditra, obstinate
rofy —— marofy, ill.

Adjectives are frequently compounded of two adjectives of an opposite signification, which destroy the force of one another, and form adjectives of an intermediate signification; *e. g.* tsa'ratsy hiany—neither good nor bad, indifferent: lavit'akeiky hiany—neither far nor near, not very distant: lavidavitr'akeiky hiany—farther, near; rather farther off, but at some distance: yet many adjectives are used before nouns, having some word to be understood, as *κατα*, in Greek; mafy sofina, i. e. hard as to the ears, deaf, wilfully stupid, doltish; "maty havana," dead as to relations, i. e. one whose relations are dead.

Degrees of Comparison.

The Comparative degree is formed in two ways:

1. By prefixing *no ho* (than) to the objects with which the positive is compared, as,

Tsara ity no ho ny sasany—this is better than the rest.
Hendry izy no ho ny zanany—he is wiser than his son.

2. By repeating the positive, and adding *ko koa*, as,

Tsara—good; tsara tsara ko koa—better.
hendry—wise; hendry hendry ko koa—wiser.

But here also, if the object is expressed, *no ho* must follow: hendry hendry ko koa no ho ny sasany—wiser than the rest.

The Superlative is made by

1. Adding *indrindra*, an adverb, signifying, exceedingly, chiefly, principally; as, tsara indrindra, best; lehibe indrindra, greatest.

2. By repeating the positive term, and inserting *dia* before it, as, tsara dia tsara—good and also good; i. e. very good, exceedingly good.

The two degrees are sometimes formed by the simple use of the particle *no;* of either one of two objects it may be affirmed, Ity no tsara—this is the good; that is, in distinction from the other, and therefore the better of the two. So also if more than two objects are referred to, and the same expression used, it means—this is the good; that is, in distinction from all the rest, and therefore the best.

CARDINAL NUMBERS.

These the Malagasy are able to express to any extent required. The first ten numbers, *isa, roa, telo, efatra, dimy, enina, fito, valo, sivy, folo,* are independent words, as will be seen by the annexed scheme. The number of tens up to a hundred, *zato*, are then expressed by adding the units to the word for ten, which is *folo.* Thus roa-polo, two tens. Folo is changed into *polo* in all cases, except *sivy.* The hundreds up to a thousand, *arivo,* are counted in the same manner; as, roa-n-jato, telo-n-jato; (*z* being changed into *j*, and *n* assumed gratiâ euphoniæ.) The thousands follow in the same manner to a myriad, *alina*, thence to a hundred thousand. and thence to a million. The changes made by cutting off final syllables in the combinations, will appear in the annexed table.

The units are added to the numbers above the tens, to form all the intermediate numbers, and the word *amby* inserted between them, signifying add or adding to: the article is inserted after *amby;* and after *iray k* is inserted; as, irai-k-ambi-ni(ny)-folo—one-add-ten, that is, eleven; [1]roa—ambi-ni(ny)-folo—two-add-ten, that is, twelve.

The numbers always commence from the lowest unit, and rise regularly up to the highest amount; as, roambi-telo-polo-amby valonjato amby arivo, that is, 2 added to 30-added to 800-added to 1000=1832.

Natives on the coast reverse this mode, and often place the tens first, and the units follow: folo raik-amby, 10, 1 added, 11.

When near a hundred or a thousand, that high number is sometimes put first, and the deficiency then mentioned; as, zato latsaka roa: one hundred less two, that is, 98.

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[1] The two *a* 's coalesce in sound, one only is heard.

TABLE OF CARDINAL NUMBERS.

1,	isa—iraikia: used on the coast.
2,	roa.
3,	telo.
4,	efatra.
5,	dimy.
6,	enina.
7,	fito.
8,	valo.
9,	sivy.
10,	folo.
11,	raikambinifolo—one, the addition of ten.
12,	roambinifolo—two.
20,	roapolo, two tens—*f* changed into *p*, for euphony.
21,	raikambiroapolo—one, the addition of two tens.
30,	telo-polo—three tens.
40,	efa-polo—tra cut off in efatra.
50,	dimampolo.
60,	enim-polo.
70,	fito-polo.
80,	valo-polo.
90,	sivi-folo.
100,	zato.
200,	roanjato.
250,	dimam-polo amby roanjato—5 tens, addition of 200.
255,	dimy amby dimampolo amby roanjato.
300,	telon-jato.
1000,	arivo.
1100,	zato amby arivo.
1110,	folo amby zato amby arivo.
1111,	raikambini folo amby zato amby arivo.
10000,	alina.
11000,	arivo-amby iray alina.
20002,	roa-amby roa-alina.
100000,	hetsy.
1000000,	tapitrisa; and so forward to any number required.

Ordinal, in Counting.

Voalohany—the first
faharoa—the second
fahatelo—the third
fahazato—the hundredth
faharivo—the thousandth: and so forward, affixing *faha* to the Cardinal Numbers.

Ordinal, in expressing How often.

Indray mandeha; or, indray maka; or indray monja, signifying once, at once.

indroa—twice
intelo—thrice
inefatra—four times
indimy—five times; and so forward, prefixing *in*

Ordinal, in expressing the Proportions or Fractions.

indray maka (as above) at once
ampaharoa—the secondth, i. e. the half
ampahatelo—the third
ampahefatra—the fourth
ampahafolo—the tenth.

The denominator may be prefixed to these terms; as, $\frac{2}{7}$, $\frac{5}{8}$, $\frac{9}{10}$.

roa-n-ampahafito $\frac{2}{7}$
dim-ampahavalo $\frac{5}{8}$
sivi-ampahafolo. $\frac{9}{10}$

Ordinal, expressing a Number of Days.

This is done by prefixing *ha*, and postfixing *ana*; as,

hateloana—three days
hefarana—four —
hadimiana—five —
henemana—six —
hafitoana—seven —
havaloana—eight —
hasiviana—nine —
hafoloana—ten —, &c.

ON PRONOUNS.

The Personal Pronouns are,

Nominative Case,

1st	Person	Sing.	Izaho, and aho, I. Izaho is placed before verbs, and then it is emphatic; aho is placed after verbs.
2nd	——	—	hianao; thou.
3rd	——	—	izy; he, she, it.
1st	——	Pl.	izahay; we, in distinction from the party addressed. isikia; we, including the party addressed.
2nd	——	—	hianareo; ye.
3rd	——	—	izy; they.

Possessive Case, *Affixes*.

1st	——	Sing.	ko, o; my, of me, by me, &c.
2nd	——	—	nao, ao; thy, of thee, by thee.
3rd	——	—	ny; his, hers, its, by him, &c.
1st	——	Pl.	nay, ay; our, by us, (exclusive of those addressed.) ntsikia; our, by us, (inclusive of those addressed.)
2nd	——	—	nareo, areo; your, by you.
3rd	——	—	ny; their, by them, &c.

Objective Case, governed by Active Verbs.

1st	——	Sing.	ahy; me.
2nd	——	—	anao; thee.
3rd	——	—	azy; him, her, it,
1st	——	Pl.	anay; us, (exclusive of those addressed.) antsikia; us, (inclusive of those addressed.)
2nd	——	—	anareo; ye.
3rd	——	—	azy; them.

There is a striking peculiarity in the Malagasy language, in its abundant supply of *Demonstrative* Pronouns, intended to define the distance of the persons or things spoken of in conversation, as if to make them more distinctly present to the hearer's mind, and in many cases as if to paint them to the eye.

Many of these words may, perhaps, be more properly considered Adverbs of place, than Demonstrative Pronouns; but the familiar use of them by the natives, leads one to class them under the present head, as probably the most appropriate on the whole.

Ao, there; at a short distance; as, ao ala trano, there, outside the house.

Eo, there, at a shorter distance; as, eo ambaravarana, there, in the door.

Io, there, close at hand; this one, distinctly pointed out: io vazaha io, the white man there, this white man.

Atsy, there; not at a very great distance.

Etsy, there; but nearer.

Itsy, this, or these.

Ity, this: Iny, that.

Itikitra, this, or here in this place; on which the hand may even be placed.

Ireny, those.

Iretsy, those.

Irery, within sight, those, but rather more distant than Iretsy.

Itoy, this; pointing at, as if with the finger.

Irony,
Itony, } these; in distinction from Iretsy, those.
Ireto,
Ireo, those, these, or this; pointed out.
Izato, this one; this one now addressed.
Ireroa.
Iretikitra. } those yonder.

On Verbs.

The language has one substantive verb, *misy;* and it uses as auxiliaries three others—*mety*, *mahazo*, and *mahay*, the first signifying *may*, in the sense of permission, and suitability; the second, *have* and *can*, usually signifying moral capability; and the third *can*, in the sense of physical capability.

The moods of verbs are the indicative and imperative. The infinitive can scarcely be considered as distinct from the indicative. The subjunctive and potential moods are the same as the indicative, formed by the addition of some appropriate part of the auxiliary verbs.

The tenses are, the present, past, future, and a paulo-post-future. Additional tenses, expressive of a more limited and definite time than simply past and future, can also be formed, and are in frequent use, by the addition of certain particles, and parts of the substantive verb.

The tenses are made by the change of the initial letters, and by the aid of auxiliary particles.

When the pronouns precede the verb, they undergo no change; when affixed, they are admitted only in the form already shown in the list of affix pronouns.

N.B. In expanding the roots of verbs into the different forms or conjugations, by prefixing the formative particles, the observations respecting the "changes of letters" must be carefully noticed; as, from *fotsy*, white, comes *ma-motsy*, to whiten—*mahafotsy*, to cause to be white, able to make it white. *V* seems to take the change into *m* as *f—vonjy*, *mamonjy*, *mahavonjy*, *mpamonjy*. Sometimes *v* changes into *b*, and takes *m* before it; as, *voly*, *mam-boly ; vady*, *manam-bady;* though this latter is rather a compound verb, and consists of *manana* to have, and *vady* a wife.

Remarks on the Roots of Verbs, and the various modes or Conjugations formed from them.

1. The roots of verbs are usually of a participial nature, as already intimated in remarks on the roots of the language, and

some of these are also nouns. As nouns, they can be used in their simple state, with the article *ny* prefixed; and as verbs, by the formatives to be now specified.

2. A participial root can be made into the imperative of a a verb, passively, by the change of the termination, and advancing the accent one syllable,—*ova*, *ovao*; *kapoka, kapohy*. All the imperatives of the other passive forms of the verbs are made agreeably to the analogy of this radical imperative.

3. A great number of these roots can be verbalized by prefixing the particle *voa*, and annexing the affix pronouns; as, *voa ova, voa ovako*. The force of the word *voa* seems to be "completion," and, added to a verb, denotes that the thing spoken of "is done"—the act has passed completely, and has been done by some active agent, not by any internal process of its own—in which case *voa* could not be used.

4. The root is again employed to form a class of verbs by prefixing the letter *a*, as, *aova*. This form has actually an active signification, and takes an objective case after the affix pronouns, *aovako azy*.

5. Another form is made by giving a participial termination to the root, adding *ena*, *ina*, *ana*, or *aina*, and sometimes *vina*, *vana*, *zena*, *zana*, or some other similar adjuncts. The final syllable is rejected when the affix pronouns are added. The signification is participial.

6. A verb is formed from the root by prefixing *mi*. This is generally neuter or intransitive, and can then admit the pronouns only in oblique cases, i.e. governed by prepositions. But when the verb in *mi* is of an active signification, the accusative case is governed as in other verbs. When the *mi* is active, it supersedes the corresponding form in *man*, as, *mividy*. Nouns are formed from this class, as will appear in the Paradigm.

8. A form is made by prefixing *mampi* to the root, and this expresses the cause. It has much the same signification as the hiphel conjugation in Hebrew. It appears to flow regularly from the form in *mi*, and expresses the cause of the thing being in that state to which the verb in *mi* could be applied. It requires an accusative case after it. It takes the same variations as the verb in *mi*.

9. A further form is made from the *mi* by changing it into *mifampi*, and this adds the idea of reciprocity to that of causativeness; as in

misotro—I drink.
mampisotro—I cause another to drink.
mifampisotro—they cause one another to drink.

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PARADIGM OF A REGULAR VERB.

SEE VOL. I. PAGE 512.

		Verb in mi	*V. in mam*	*V. in mana*	*V. in maha*	*V. in mampi*	*V. in mampan*	*V. in mampampan*	*V. in mifan*	*V. in mifampi*	*V. in mifampan.*	*V. in mifampifan*	*V. in mampifan*	*V. in mampifampan*
Indicative Mood.	*p.*	misolo	manolo	manasolo	mahasolo	mampisolo	mampanolo	mampampanolo	mifanolo	mifampisolo	mifampanolo	mifampifanolo	mampifanolo	mampifampanolo
	pr.	nisolo	nanolo	nanasolo	nahasolo	nampisolo	nampanolo	nampampanolo	nifanolo	nifampisolo	nifampanolo	nifampifanolo	nampifanolo	nampifampanolo
	f.	hisolo	hanolo	hanasolo	hahasolo	hampisolo	hampanolo	hampampanolo	hifanolo	hifampisolo	hifampanolo	hifampifanolo	hampifanolo	hampifampanolo
						p. ampisoloina	ampanoloina	ampampanoloina					ampifanoloina	ampifampanoloina
						nampisoloina	nampanoloina	nampampanoloina					nampifanoloina	nampifampanoloina
						hampisoloina	hampanoloina	hampampanoloina					hampifanoloina	hampifampanoloina
Imperative Mood:		misolóa	manolóa	manasolóa	mahasolóa	mampisolóa	mampanolóa	mampampanolóa	mifanolóa	mifampisolóa	mifampanolóa	mifampifanolóa	mampifanolóa	mampifampanolóa
		aoka hisolo	aoka hanolo	aoka hanasolo	aoka hahasolo	aoka hampisolo	aoka hampanolo	aoka hampampanolo	aoka hifanolo	aoka hifampisolo	aoka hifampanolo	aoka hifampifanolo	aoka hampifanolo	aoka hampifampanola
						p. imp. ampisoloy	—ampanoloy	—ampampanoloy	– ifanoloy	—ifampisoloy	—ifampanoloy	—ifampifanoloy	—ampifanoloy	—ampifampanoloy
Infinitive Mood.		hisolo.	hanolo	hanasolo	hahasolo	hampisolo	hampanolo	hampampanolo	hifanolo	hifampisolo	hifampanolo	hifampifanolo	hampifanolo	hampifampanolo
Participial Nouns.	*p.*	isolaona	anoloana	anasoloana	ahasoloana	ampisoloana	ampanoloana	ampampanoloana	ifanoloana	ifampisoloana	ifampanoloana	ifampifanoloana	ampifanoloana	ampifampanoloana
	pr.	nisoloana	nanoloana	nanasoloana	nahasoloana	nampisoloana	nampanoloana	nampampanoloana	nifanoloana	nifampisoloana	nifampanoloana	nifampifanoloana	nampifanoloana	nampifampanoloana
	f.	hisoloana	hanoloana	hanasoloana	hahasoloana	hampisoloana	hampanoloana	hampampanoloana	hifanoloana	hifampisoloana	hifampanoloana	hifampifanoloana	hampifanoloana	hampifampanoloana
Nouns.		fisolo	fanolo	fanasolo		fampisolo	fampanolo	fampampanolo	fifanolo	fifampisolo	fifampanolo	fifampifanolo	fampifanolo	
		mpisolo	mpanolo	mpanasolo	mpahasolo	mpampisolo	mpampanolo	mpampampanolo	mpifanolo	mpifampisolo	mpifampanolo	mpifampifanolo	mpifampifanolo	mpampifampanolo
		fisoloana	fanoloana	fanasoloana		fampisoloana	fampanoloana	fampampanoloana	fifanoloana	fifampisoloana	fifampanoloana	fifampifanoloana	fifampifanoloana	

The English to the above can be deduced from the succeeding Explanation of the Present Tenses.

Root, —Solo, s.—substitute.
voasolo, tafasolo, p. p.—substituted.
asolo, p. p.—being placed as a substitute.
soloana, p. p.—being substituted.
Misolo, v. n.—to be a substitute: v. a.—to substitute.
isoloana, p. n.—the substituting, cause, means, &c. of it.
fisolo, s.—the mode of substituting; that which should be substituted.
mpisolo, s.—one who constantly substitutes another.
fisoloana, s.—the time and place of substituting.

Manolo, Manasolo, v. a.—to replace; to place another as a substitute.
Mahasolo, v. a.—to be capable of substituting.
Mampisolo, causative verb—to cause to substitute.
Mampanolo, causative verb—to cause to replace a thing, to cause to place another as a substitute.
Mampampanolo, causative verb—to cause to order to substitute.
Mifanolo, Mifampisolo, reciprocal verb—to exchange reciprocally.

Mifampanolo, causative reciprocal verb—to cause to replace a thing reciprocally.
Mifampifanolo, causative reciprocal verb—to cause reciprocally to substitute, (including more than two persons.)
Mampifanolo, causative verb—to cause to exchange with one another.
Mampifampanolo, causative reciprocal verb—to order to cause to exchange.

10. A verb is formed by the prefixing of *mifan*. This form conveys the idea of the action being mutual between two or more parties; they are equally engaged in it, but do not so actively excite each other to it, as in the form *mifampi*; e.g. *mifan-atrikia* expresses the action of two persons facing each other, as in a law-suit: the party causing them to face one another would be *mifampan-atrikia,* a form which follows next; as,

11. A verb is also made by prefixing *mifampan*, and this expresses a cause of reciprocal or mutual actions, that cause being some intelligent agent; and hence this form arises out of the active and not the neutral form of verbs; i.e. from verbs in *man*, and not from those in *mi*.

12. The regular active form of a verb is made by prefixing *man* to the root. This, however, sometimes becomes *ma*, *man*, *mand*, or *mang*, according to the succeeding letters, governed by the analogy of sounds in the language.

Some verbs in this form have a passive or neutral signification, and then such roots are destitute of the usual passive form in *mi*. The *man* compensates for it.

13. A causative form is made, arising out of the active in *man*, by prefixing *mampan* to the root. This follows the analogy of the verb in *man*. Both express active agency: e.g.

manao trano—I build a house.
mampanao trano azy—I cause him to build a house

It governs its objective case in the accusative.

14. A mode is made of some roots by prefixing *mana*. The signification in this form is so nearly allied to that in *man*, that in the paradigm it will be noticed under the form in *man*. A dictionary alone can explain the difference of signification. No general rule can be found applicable to each particular word. The form is often precisely the same as it would be if the *man* were employed, and the succeeding letters changed agreeably to the analogy of changes. In truth, *mana* seems sometimes used merely because a change would not be so euphonous to the native ear.

15. A form in almost constant use is also made by prefixing *maha* to the root: *maha* may also be prefixed to numerous words and short phrases, not being roots. It takes the signification of causing to be, showing to be, proving to be, able to make to be.

mahafotsy—causing to become white, as with chalk or paint.
mahamenatra—causing to feel ashamed.
maharatsy—to spoil, adapted to spoil.

maha-olombelona—causing to be a human being, i.e. the possession of mind and body causes it.

This form assumes the active causative *mampaha.*

16. Numerous verbs are also formed by the prefix *mihia,* which signifies, gradual process.

mihiahendry—to become more and more wise, to improve in wisdom.

mihiamaro—to increase in numbers, to multiply.

17. Numerous verbs are also formed by the prefix *manka,* which generally signifies coming, or becoming: *rary,* ill; *mankarary,* to make ill, to cause to become ill: *ary,* yonder; *mankary,* to come yonder: *aty,* here; *mankaty,* to come here. Hence, *mank* or *manka* is prefixed to most adverbs of place, and to many roots besides; as, *mankasitraka.*

18. A few other verbal forms are made by the addition of prefixes, adapted to convey distinct ideas in the cases intended, but where the verbs are not conjugated through the different moods and tenses.

It does not appear necessary to offer any remarks respecting the other parts of speech. They are found in the language, but, excepting in the use of prepositions, which is very limited, and substituted for the most part by idiomatic constructions of participial forms of verbs, they do not present any peculiarities that demand present notice.

The general structure of the language is characterized by simplicity and perspicuity. Sentences are usually short, and unembarrassed by circumlocution or intricacy. There is a considerable use made of figurative expressions, but the figure is rather in the whole idea or sentiment of the passage, than in the particular words employed. The language is by no means incapable of the charms and power of oratory; of which some illustrations have already been given in the course of the preceding history. Many of the leading men in the several districts, who, by virtue of their office or station, are frequently entrusted with affairs of business, and are consequently in the habit of public speaking, possess highly respectable abilities as public orators. Their success, however, seems to depend far more on well-timed addresses to the passions and predilections of their auditors, than to any process of long and laboured ratiocination. Their style admits of the repetition of the same idea, and in the same terms, in order to impress any sentiment, or leading part of a sentiment, that is considered particularly emphatic. No inconsiderable portion of emphasis is added by the physical and mechanical address of the speaker,—in reference to the management of the voice, the action of the limbs, and the use of the shield, the spear, the sword, or the long walking-staff used by the older people. In their public assemblies, a speaker seldom confines himself to one spot of ground, but moves about over a space of several feet, or even yards, and keeps up attention by his movements, as well as by his speech and his voice.

The very extensive use of a figurative mode of expression, constitutes one of the charms of the Malagasy language. It renders description lively and animated, and amply compensates for the absence of various abstract terms, which in a more cultivated state of society may be expected. Several of these figurative expressions consist of compound words; in other cases they are phrases. Of both these, a few examples may be adduced.—" *Mitorak'ampivalanana* :" literally, " to throw (as a stone) into that which is flowing down;" denoting, " to aggravate, to exaggerate."—" *Mitsamboki-mikimpy* :" literally, " to take a leap while winking with the eye;" figuratively, " to venture rashly."—" *Mitsipi-doha-laka-mitana* :" this is a phrase compounded by contractions into one word; but which written at full length would be, Mitsipika(*ny*)loha(*ny*)(*ny*)lakana mitana; literally, " to kick the head of a canoe that crosses (the water,") figuratively, " to ill requite a kindness," or, as in the English proverb, to " speak ill of the bridge that carries you safely over."—" *Rano-maso-tsy-miarak'amam-paty* :" literally, " water of the eye, (tears,) not following together with the dying," " not weeping at the time of the death (of a friend;") figuratively, " doing something out of season; too late for the occasion; repentance too late."—" *Misazi-rambon-osy* :" literally, " to catch hold of a goat by its tail," " to incur disappointment."—" *Mamoha-fota-mandry* :" literally, " to stir up the sediment that has settled down;" figuratively, " to renew a dispute."—" *Manisa ravina* :" literally, " to count leaves;" figuratively, " to entertain wild flights of the imagination."—" *Manao ariary zato am-pandriana* :" literally, " to make a hundred dollars on his bed;" figuratively, " to build castles in the air."—" *Mandri-andri-andefona* :" literally, " to lie down upon a spear;' figuratively, " to be in a state of painful anxiety; to lie upon thorns."

Of native compositions it is difficult to give examples, and for the simple reason, that no literature has yet existed in the country. The national mind has not yet been committed to a written form or standard. A large amount, however, of current and prevailing thoughts and sentiments exists traditionally, and a portion of these has been committed to writing within the last few years. They consist of the *proverbial sayings* that have been handed down from time immemorial, and embody the principal part of the language; besides these, are native fables, legends, songs, enigmas, and the studied forms of address used on all solemn and public occasions, as, in the public assemblies, marriages, ordeals, funerals, &c.

The fables, which are numerous, are not remarkable for any striking or valuable qualities. Many of them are pleasing and amusing; far more, feeble and puerile; some, of a decidedly vicious tendency; and a few, adapted to instil ideas of loyalty, filial duty, honesty, and industry.

The legends are copious, but of little value. They contain no system; they imply no system of ethics, theology, or philosophy. The absence of all reference to system in the legends, is ample proof of its absence generally from the minds of the people. To this circumstance, sufficient reference has been already made in the history.

The proverbial sayings present the fullest exhibition of the grade of mind among the people, both intellectually and morally, and especially if the "Hainteny" be added to the "Ohabolana." The latter are more properly proverbs, or short sententious sayings; and the former, more lengthened popular repartees, jocose quiddities, and often amorous trifles, embracing puns, paronomasia, unmeaning words for the sake of sound, and ditties capable of almost any solution the hearer pleases.

As an illustration of the poetry of their bards, it would not be easy to find a better or more pleasing specimen than that contained in the "Song concerning the Dead," by Razafilahy, given at page 276 of this volume. Of fables, sufficient examples have already been given.

A few proverbs are now added, and an illustration or two of the Hainteny.

"OHABOLANA"—PROVERBS.

1. "Rano madio iray lovia, rano maloto eransotro, try mahaleo ny fandoto."—Of clean water one dish, of polluted water one spoonful; the latter would spoil the former.

   That is, One foul blot may ruin a fair character.

2. "Mahita loza ry kalamomba, mizambo-balala ho any ny zanak' olona."—Ah! stern fate of the childless, she catches the locust, not for her own, but for the child of another.

   Used of a person whose exertions turn to another's advantage, but not to his own.

3. "Aza manao rary harato railahy mifanakeiky koa tsy mifandray."—Don't make the open plait, which is near, but never unites.

   That is, Don't let your friendship be distant, but close and cordial.

4. "Toy ny mandry ampasikia, mora ama-mandry fa sarotra ama-mifoha."— Like lying down in the sand—easy in lying down, but difficult in getting up.

   Used of one in whom you are easily induced to place dependence, but who injures rather than benefits.

5. "Handroso aho maty ray, mianotra aho maty reny."— If I advance, my father is dead; if I return, mother is dead.

   That is, Calamity befalls me whatever step I take. I am sure to meet with misfortune.

HAINTENY; that is, *Capabilities of words, or the beauties of the language.*

1. Well-fitted masonry, I arranged it, but it has been overturned by some one; I raised the kiady, (notice not to enter premises,) this has been uprooted; let the god who is above not long delay judgment, that he who has done me the wrong may repent.

2. Don't let your friendship for me be like striking iron, (fierce and violent,) for if too much force be used, it snaps; don't let your friendship be as unreeled (raw) cotton, soft and beautiful, but effecting nothing; do me kindness, and I'll esteem you as a stone on one's head, to be feared and respected; treat me ill, and I'll treat you as the pebbles placed on the mat when the rice is dried, which at midday are tossed away as valueless.

3. Don't be too high, for fear of the thunderbolt,—don't be too low, for fear of being soiled; be moderate; moderation is best. The eggs of the kitsikitsikia are in the sides of the rock, (inaccessible,) the eggs of the tararaka are among the horondrano, (a kind of grass,) easily found.—What I care little about is close at hand, obtained without difficulty: what I wish for is difficult to get. Moderation is a difficult thing.

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