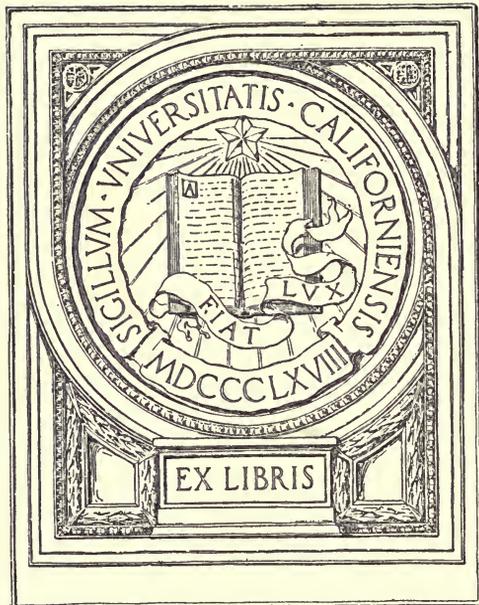


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THE MASSAWOMEKES

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From the AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN, July, 1881.

THE MASSAWOMEKES.

BY ALBERT S. GATSCHET, ^{author} 1832-1907.

The racial affinity of the Massawomekes cannot be established on historical grounds alone, for these are too scanty, considering the early period of discoveries in which this people is mentioned. All that has a linguistic bearing on the subject must be also carefully examined to arrive at a result.

When, in 1608, Capt. John Smith heard, for the first time, of the above nation, the reports reached him through the tribes settled upon the shores of Chesapeake Bay. These were all of the Algonkin race (excepting, perhaps, a few tribes living on the northern shores), and we may, therefore, expect from them appellations taken from their own dialects, even for tribes of foreign affiliation, as they did, *e. g.*, with the Maquas. We are told by Smith that the Patawomekes, the Patuxents, the Sasquesahannocks and the Tockwoughes implored his assistance against their tormentors, the Massawomekes, and that he had himself an interview with a party of the latter, who were crossing the head of Chesapeake Bay in seven canoes.

The *names* of these four tribes are certainly Algonkin, and that of the Patawomekes or Potómaks coincides in its termination so closely with that of the Massawomekes, that we can assume the same origin for both. In the majority of the Algonkin languages, a term like *massa* means *large, great*, and *-ek* is either the locative ending, *-ik, -k, -g*, or, more probably, the suffix of the anim. plural *-gi, -ki*, occurring, *e. g.*, in Shawnee; one is supposed by A. L. Guss, Esq., to mean *lake, or water*; *umpe* is *water* in Pamptico, *gami, kami, lake* in Odjibwē, and *somaquone water* in Etchemin. *Wome, ome*, also composes the tribal name Patawomeke, for Heckewelder explains it from the Delaware language: "We have come by water." Thus the term *ome* can be ascertained to mean *water*; this would make of the Massawomekes "*those on a great water*," and this was the interpretation of the name given at the time to Capt. Smith.

But, fortunately for us, Smith is not our sole authority upon this northern people. In 1632 Capt. H. Fleet visited the Chesapeake Bay and sailed up the Potomac river to the upper end of navigation; his report is published in Neill's "Founders of

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Maryland," Albany, 1876. He relates that "the Emperor (of the Powhatans) is fearful to punish the Nascotines (the Anacostias, on and about the present site of Washington, D. C.), because they are protected by the Massomacks or Cannyda (Canada) Indians, who have used to convey all such English truck as cometh into the river (Potomac) to the Massomacks." "I find the Indians of that populous place (the Massomacks) are governed by four kings, whose towns are of several names, Tonhoga, Mosticum, Shaunetowa and Usserahak, reported above 30,000 persons, and that they have palisades about the towns made with great trees, and with scaffolds upon the walls." Fleet's brother, a fur-trader, reached the country of the Massawomekes in seven days from the tribal settlement of the Piscataway, on the Potomac, about eighteen miles below Washington, and returned from there in five days; he was told that the Usserahak people counted 7,000 Indians. Capt. Fleet also met a few "Hereckenes, who are cannibals," live three days' journey from the Mosticums, and sell their beaver "at the plantation in Cannida." At this date (1632), the English under Kirk had conquered Canada, and Capt. Fleet identified the axes in possession of the Herechenes as of the kind Kirk traded in Canada.

From the above we gather a few valuable points, from which conclusions on the affinity of the Massawomekes can be drawn. It appears that Massawomeke is a comprehensive term for a people consisting of four chieftaincies, the names of which are transmitted to us, and can partly be identified with tribes mentioned by writers of later epochs. The three first-named "towns" traded beaver-skins with the English, and Fleet represents them as being anthropophagists.

The first of these four "towns" Fleet calls *Tonhoga* and *Tohogaes*. There is similarity in name with that of the Tongorias, who are identical with the Eries (Erigas, Erigheks, Eriechronous, Gakwágaono). In the Onondaga term *tchu-éragak*, *wild cat*, the origin of Erie, styled "*gens felina*, *Nation of the Cat*," may still be recognized; they were called so after a wild cat, probably a sort of lynx, which abounded in one district of their wide domain, and supplied them with furs for the trade. The following passages may also be adduced from Pierre Margry, *Découvertes*, vol. I: "they (the Sonmontouans), were told that we came from Onnontio (the French Governor), to see the tribes called by them Toagenha, living (situez) on the river Ohio, and that we requested them to furnish us a slave, as a guide to these parts." (p. 130.) "A prisoner, said to be of the Toaguenhas, spoke Algonkin, but his dialect differed more from the good Algonkin than that of the Outaouacs." (pp. 133-134.) "The

Sonnontouans told our Dutch interpreter that he was a fool to act as our guide to the Toaguenha, who were very dangerous people, and would certainly assail us at night, after lurking around our camp-fires; that we would run the danger of meeting the Antastoes along Ohio river, who would most certainly "break our heads," and that on this account the Sonnontouans declined to come with us, lest the extermination of the French may be imputed to them." The distance from their town to Ohio river was unanimously stated to be six days' land travel of twelve leagues each day; but if we travelled by water on lake Erie, we could reach the Ohio by three days' portages (pp. 137-138).—*Report of one of La Salle's travels by the Abbé de Gallinée, 1669-1670.* To the name Tonhoga we may also compare that of the Tohoa-irough-roonan, who lived within or north of the Alleghany ridge, perhaps in West Virginia, and whom the Iroquois claimed to have conquered (Treaty of Lancaster, 1744).

Fleet's *Mosticum* were "forest Indians," for, in the eastern Algonkin dialects mitik, me'htug, mishtuk, matchtok, is the generic word for *tree*. It still lives in Mystic, a frequent local name on the Connecticut and Massachusetts coasts.

Usserahak is too obscure a name to offer any opportunity for conjectures. It was probably a generic term, for we see from *Wm. Byrd's Westover Documents*, vol. I., that the Catawba towns on the Santee river were also called *Usherees*, although these have nothing in common with Fleet's *Usserahak*. If the term was Iroquois, we might think of áhshare, *knife*, as a weapon characteristic of some tribe; *cutlass, sword*; á's'hare in Mohawk; from this word was formed the name Assarigoe, quoted below.

The *Shaunetowa*, who lived in the town most distant from the Potomac, can, I think, readily be identified with the Tsounon-touans or Senecas; even now, from historic reminiscence, the Wendot in the Indian Territory call the Mountain (?) Senecas, "who had settled in the Alleghanies of Pennsylvania," Sonotuá-runu. Gallinée states (*Margry Doc.*, vol. I., p. 128), that the Sonnontouans were living in four towns, two of them larger than the two others, with a total of about 1,200 warriors, and that this tribe was the most populous of all the Five Nations. These towns lay at considerable distance from each other.

The *Herechenes*, "haughty in their language," were not the friends of the *Usserahak*, as the latter informed Capt. Fleet. They are the "Hirocois" of Champlain; still we cannot decide whether the Mohawks alone are meant by this term, or other tribes of the eastern part of the Five Nations are included in it.

From all facts stated it becomes apparent that the "Herechenes" were not included in the term *Massawomeke*, but that this

term comprehended at least one of the Five Nations, *the Senecas*, and that the three others were allied or confederated with them. Indian history sufficiently proves that it is more natural to suppose racial and linguistic affinity between the four chieftaincies of the Massawomekes, than to build them up of tribes of disparate affinities and heterogeneous elements. What we cannot possibly decide now, for want of sufficient information, is whether the three other tribes formed, with the Shaunetowa, the four villages of the Senecas mentioned by Gallinée, or whether they were scattered all the way from Lake Ontario to the Ohio river, as the name Tonhoga seems to indicate.

To assume that the Massawomekes were the Shawnees, would be to assume that they had formed an alliance with the Shaunetowa, or Senecas. It is true that the Five Nations once concluded a treaty with the Governor of Virginia, in which the Shawnees, or a portion of them, are included as a party standing on the side of the Five Nations. But this was *over one hundred years later* than the time we first hear of the Massawomekes. By the treaty of Albany, concluded in September, 1722, the Five Nations and their allies engaged themselves not to cross the Blue Ridge (*viz.*, the easternmost ridge of the Alleghanies), nor the Potomac river in a southward direction for any purpose whatever, except when provided with English passes. This section of the treaty runs as follows: "Brother Assarigoe (Gov. Howard, of Virginia): As you engaged for ten nations, so do we, *Vizt.* (*vice versa*), for the Five Nations, and for the Tuscaruros, and Connestogoes, Chuanoes, Ochtaghquanawrorroones, Ostagankees, which live upon Sasquahana river." *William Byrd*, of Westover, Va., *History of the Dividing Line*. Richmond, 1866. Pp. 262, seq. 4to.

LINGUISTIC NOTES.

BY ALB. S. GATSCHEP, WASHINGTON, D. C.

SHAWNEE.—The four historical divisions of the Shawnee or Sháwano tribe of Indians, as given in their own language, are as follows: (1) Pekuí, or P'kuí. (2) Menekut-thégi. (3) Tsalax-gásagi. (4) Kispogō'gi. These divisions must not be confounded with the clans of the tribe, of which there are twelve at least, each of them having members in every one of the four divisions. The first of them, Pekuí, means "ashes," plur., pekuígi; it gave origin to the town of Piqua, in Ohio, where this portion of the tribe was once settled, and probably refers to their "camp-fire." The second division formed the historical "Mackacheek towns," in Logan county, Ohio, destroyed in 1786 by General Logan. To the fourth division belonged Tecumseh and his brother, the prophet. The signification of the other names (besides Pekuí) is not known, but the ending -gi shows that they are given in the plural form. The name Tecumseh is pronounced Tkámthi, Tkám'the, "going across," as, *f. e.*, through the midst of a crowd, or across the path of another person; from netkamáthka, "I go across."

ON the *numeral classifiers* occurring in MAYA, and in the cognate QUICHÉ, of Guatemala, Count Hyacinthe de Charencey has inserted an exhaustive article in the *Revue de Linguistique*, Vol. XIII., pp. 339-386. These "expletives," as he calls them, do not add anything to the meaning of the sentence; they only show that these Indians are classing the objects of which they speak, into certain concrete categories. In the Maya the author has discovered thirty-three of these classifiers. Another series of classifiers, called "collectives," is more numerous in Quiché than in Maya, and we find here a term for globular, another for flat, disk-shaped, another for pliant objects, others for objects suspended, standing in a file, etc. In this and in many other respects, Quiché shows a more archaic structure than the Maya of the peninsula of Yucatan.

SARAKHOLÉ is the name of an African people inhabiting both sides of the Upper Senegal River, and engaged in commercial pursuits. Its language pertains to the Bambarra stock; all its words end in one of the vowels u, e, i, a, the nouns usually

showing the termination e (French é). The pronoun, verb and noun do not inflect for gender, but the noun forms a plural, generally ending in -u. The personal and the possessive pronoun are identical. No cases exist for the inflection of the noun, only postpositions. Nothing seems to have been published upon this Western African language, except the article written for the *Revue de Linguistique*, XIV., pp. 80-96, by General L. Faidherbe, who gives verbal inflections, syntactic examples, and a very curious and instructive war-song of the tribe.

KHASIA is a language spoken in the mountain ridge separating Eastern Bengal from the valley of the Middle Brahmaputra, by 200,000 half-civilized natives. The literary specimens published in this tongue are mainly of a religious character, and were partly transcribed by means of the Bengali alphabet. Khasia, with its six dialects, forms a linguistic family for itself, and is most remarkable on account of forming a transitory stage between the isolating or monosyllabic languages of the Asiatic continent, and the agglutinative order of tongues, as Abel Hovelacque has shown in a very instructive article printed in the *Revue de Linguistique*, XIV., pp. 20-47. Some linguistic specimens are given, with translation and partial analysis, from the Khasia New Testament. Some twenty years ago, Prof. Cuno von der Gabelentz had published a Khasia grammar and vocabulary in German.



