



On the Origin and Progress of the People of Madagascar

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Source: *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 5 (1876), pp. 181-198

Published by: [Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2841393>

Accessed: 14/06/2014 15:00

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boys' stature was the smallest. It was not maintained by Mr. Galton that the deficiency of size in the town group was altogether due to bad effects of nurture on the individual boys; on the contrary, he would be disposed to ascribe much of it to the town life of their parents, and probably of other ancestors; but these were subjects requiring more statistics than were before them at present, before they could be properly discussed.

The following paper was read by the author :

On the ORIGIN and PROGRESS of the PEOPLE of MADAGASCAR.
By JOSEPH MULLENS, D.D., Foreign Secretary of the
London Missionary Society.

IN recent years special interest has been taken by Englishmen in the people of Madagascar. For a long period a bitter persecution was waged against the few Christian converts in the island; they were found to be heroic and faithful, and at length, as the result of their steadfastness, suddenly a strange transformation of the chief tribes took place; the idols were burned, and the rulers, nobles, and inhabitants in the Central Provinces declared themselves Christians. Many friendly travellers have since visited them. A cordial interest in the growth of the nation has been shown by both the English and French Governments; the export and import trade of the island has steadily increased to about £500,000 a year, and the course of improvement has been stimulated in a variety of ways.

Many books have been written both about the land and the people of Madagascar. But just as the descriptions of the country and its maps were (till lately) derived almost entirely from the memoir and map of Colonel Lloyd, so to a very large extent the descriptions given of the language, history, and customs of the people have been drawn from the ablest work on the subject, the "*History of Madagascar*," in two volumes, written by the Rev. W. Ellis, in 1838. The time has come to revise these views of former days. As much has been added of late to our knowledge of the geography of the island, so, many things have become clear which were formerly obscure, in relation to the people. During a twelve months' visit to the island, I have had the opportunity of travelling over all the Central Provinces, and of seeing much of the people, as well as of hearing of their past history and present progress. I gladly avail myself, therefore, of the opportunity which has been kindly furnished to me by the President and Council of this Institute, to state to its members some of the conclusions to which I have been led respecting them.

The Malagasy people appear to me to be a single race. Not-

withstanding a tradition about "dwarfs," nowhere do we find any tribe, or clan, or race, in any secluded corner of the land (such as we meet with in the hill districts of India, of Sumatra, and of Borneo), totally different from the inhabitants of the plains or open provinces. Nor do we meet with any portion of the people specially degraded below their fellows as a conquered and despised race. So far as known, the people of the entire island are in most respects similar to one another, and, sixty years ago, they stood on a more common level than they do now. The main differences at present existing between one portion and another, are the results of Christian education, and of compact, just, and settled government.

There is undoubtedly one distinction which may be drawn among the Malagasy: they may be divided into the dark and the fair tribes. From the first, writers on Madagascar have referred to this difference between them. But in the face of important points of agreement, I think too much has been made of it. It is well known to residents in India that low, hot, saline, and malarious districts tend to darken the olive complexion; while dry, open, cooler plains, tend to bleach it and render it fair. Now, it is the coast tribes of Madagascar, inhabiting the hot, feverish provinces, which have the dark skin; while those which occupy the central plateau, with its bracing air, are, in general, fair. Other considerations must be looked to, and I find them in the dialects spoken, and the course taken by the movements and migration of the tribes, as they gradually occupied the island. In regard to these matters, several mistakes have been made by various writers.

Judging from the movements of the tribes, and from their present relations to one another, it seems to me that the Malagasy are divided into three tribes, starting from different centres and inhabiting separate districts. The BETSIMISÁRAKA tribe and its offshoots occupy the east coast and its two lower terraces. The SÁKALÁVAS hold the broad plains of the west coast in all its length, and overlap the upper extremity of the north-east coast. The HOVAS and their branches inhabit the entire central plateau, and the flanks of its southern extremity.

The BETSIMISÁRAKAS include the Sihánakas, the people of Ankáy, and (I think also) the Tanálas, all on the higher terrace between the lines of forest. These upper divisions of the tribe have separate names; but they are merely expressive of the localities to which the people have migrated. The Betániménas are those who occupy the "districts of red clay." The Tanálas are the people of "the forest districts." The Tankays live "in Ankáy," the "open land," not concealed or broken by long hills. The Sihánakas are "the people of the lakes." In no part of the

country occupied by this tribe is the population concentrated and numerous; all their districts are thinly peopled. Important mistakes have been made in regard to these subdivisions. Both the Sihánakas and the Bezánózáno of Ankáy have been described as Sákalávas. But a visit to the districts which they inhabit shows at once that with the Sákalávas they have nothing to do. They are shut off from the latter by all but impassable mountains. They are Betsimisárakas in their houses, their dialect, and the dressing of their hair, and an examination of the country plainly indicates the points on the east coast from which this people started. In regard to the still greater error of regarding the entire Betsimisáraka people as half-breed Arabs, there is even less to be said. The statement must have originated in some mistake. It might apply to a few people in and around the Arab colony of St. Mary's; but it is wholly inapplicable to the entire people of the east coast.

The SÁKALÁVAS are also divided into tribes; but there is little cohesion amongst them; they live separate from one another, and have frequent petty wars. Their numbers cannot be great, though they occupy a large tract of rich, tropical country, which, under a settled government, and in diligent hands, would yield vast quantities of produce. They have for ages been at feud with their Hova neighbours, ever ready to carry off their cattle, and plunder their farmsteads and fields. The name they bear, "the tall cats," is a complimentary title given by their Hova foes, who have found them as fierce and formidable with the ancient weapons as any wild cat to be met with in the country. The Sákalávas have not been slow to return the compliment; and they contemptuously style the Hovas *Ambóalámbo*, a mixture of "the dog and the boar," "a set of vagabonds."

The HOVAS proper now occupy all the northern portion of the central plateau, whether Vonizongo, Imámo, or other districts. And though, at one time, it was usual to describe their province as Ankova, in recent days the tendency has been to drop this term altogether, and to call the entire Hova country IMÉRINA. The BETSILÉO tribe are, without doubt, of the same blood as the Hovas. The IBÁRA tribe, who live south and west of the Betsileo, are, again, kindred to the Betsileo. Each of these sections of the central population has grown numerous, has had its separate interests, and has been at feud with its fellows. Nevertheless many similarities of language, dress, customs, and manners, exist between them, and the differences are not greater than those which divide them from the other tribes of the island. Politically, these tribes are drawing nearer to each

other under the Hova rule; and these similarities will be increased and developed rather than repressed.

In the important inquiry whence the Malagasy have come, and with what other branches of the human race they are connected, the evidence supplied by their language is of the first importance. Naturally it might have been expected that, living so near to the continent of Africa, they would be connected with the African tribes, or, at least, that some of their settlements would have been founded by African colonists. And among scholars there have not been wanting those who have argued warmly that they are substantially an African people. The views of the late Mr. Crawford on this point are well known. He argued that the Malagasy are substantially a Negrito people, with woolly hair, African blood, and an inability to form an alphabet; that Malay pirates, blown away from the east, had mingled with them and left their mark upon the language, and so on. Mr. Wake follows on the same side.

Even on theory it might have been objected that the African tribes are not navigators, and that the Mozambique channel, with its strong currents, and stronger south-east winds, must have been (as it still is) a formidable barrier against intercourse between these tribes and Madagascar. But, in point of fact, there is no tribe on the island (so far as it has yet been examined) which can be shown to be substantially African in its language, its features, its habits, its relations to its neighbours. There are pure Africans in abundance (as we shall see) scattered about in certain districts on the west, imported through the Arab slave trade. And the African element has tainted the original Malagasy race. But no original and distinct tribe on the island has yet been pointed out as long-settled African colonists; much less can the entire Malagasy people be identified with such a tribe. On the contrary, the three great divisions of the Malagasy hold together, embrace almost the entire island, and their language and tribal customs suggest a totally different direction as to their origin.

In illustration of this unity of the races now occupying Madagascar, I have noted with interest that the names given to localities in all parts of the island, Sákaláva, Betsimisáraka, and Hova, are of the same character, and are plainly derived from the present Malagasy language. Many of the Sákaláva names are distinctly Hova. Off the north-west coast we find Nosibe, "big island;" Nosikomba, "monkey island;" and Nosifály, "glad island." We have Ampásiména, "red sand village;" Márolahy, "the village of princes;" and Andrá-nomalaza, "famous water." We have Márovécay, with its

"many crocodiles;" Mojanga, "the restorer of health;" and Mevatanána, "good place for a town." On the west coast we have Maintyaráno, "the black river;" Mafandrano, "hot springs;" and Mámirano, "sweet waters." We have one town, Mánandáza, "the glorious;" and another, Malaimbándy, "the place of indolent lies." We have Fierénana in Vonizongo, and on the Sákaláva coast. We have the pass of Ambodifakárana, among the limestone ridges of the Sákalávas; and under the granite moors on the Mania. Hundreds of names are scattered over the east and west coasts, bearing a striking similarity to those of the interior, and applied as fittingly to the places which they indicate. The names and the people are evidently one.

Baron Humboldt, the linguist, long since detected the Malay element in their language. Other writers have followed him. And the more attentively and completely the subject is examined, the stronger will the evidence of that origin appear. Unhappily, such a complete examination has not yet been made. Malay scholars have but partially understood Malagasy, and Malagasy scholars have looked but little into Malay, and we know scarcely more than was written, clearly and fully, by the Rev. J. J. Freeman forty years ago. Yet the materials are beginning to accumulate out of which the comparison may be made in full detail. Besides Marsden's "Grammar and Dictionary," in Crawford's "Malay Grammar," in Wallace's "Eastern Archipelago," in the Appendix of Dr. Turner's "Nineteen Years in Polynesia," there are lists of words and idioms in the Malay and its cognate dialects, Samoan, Máori, and Tahitian, available for the discussion of the question, and, ere long, we may hope to see it undertaken thoroughly. I have no pretensions to a knowledge of either tongue. But it happens that, during my visit to Madagascar, unpublished papers from competent men came into my hands, and I will venture to give a few illustrations which they furnish of the connection between the two languages. Mr. Freeman observes, with interest, that it is the Betsimisáraka edition of Malagasy which comes nearest to the Malay; and it is the Maláya branch of the language, rather than Javanese or Báli, which comes closest to Malagasy. Here is a simple list of twenty words:

<i>English.</i>	<i>Malay.</i>	<i>Malagasy.</i>
crocodile	buáya	voáya*
bone	tulang	taolang (Bets.)
fly	lalat	lálitra
fruit	búa	vóa

* The *o* in Malagasy is pronounced like the Italian *u*. This arrangement was a fatal mistake in the early writers of the language, and is calculated to mislead any one outside the island. Hova ought to have been written Húva.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Malay.</i>	<i>Malagasy.</i>
ground	tánah	tány
grow	túmboh	mi-tombo
hand	tangan	tángana (Bets.)
heaven	lángit	langitra (Bets.)
hang	gantong	mi-bantona
fear	tákut	tahotra
moon	bolan	vólana
stone	bátu	váto
year	tahun	táona
spirits	túaka	tóaka
mosquito	nya-mók	móka
two	dúa	róa
four	ámpat	éfat-ra
six	ánam	énina
ten	sá-puloh	folo
twenty	dua-puloh	roa-polo
thousand	sa-riba	arivo

In their structure and government the two languages resemble one another, but the Malay seems a less formed and complete tongue than the Malagasy. Both languages have the inclusive and exclusive pronouns, and the same form is used in the nominative and objective cases. In both reduplication is common. The prefixes through which the verb is conjugated, though differing slightly in form, constantly bear the same meaning in Malay as in Malagasy, and are used in the same way. In both cases the same sort of improvement was needed, and came from the same source. The Arab traders gave to each people the names of the days of the week and of the months of the year. The scales for weighing money are Arabic, *mizán*. The word for writing, *sóratra*, seems Arabic also.

Additional improvement to the Malagasy came from their intercourse with the French, who in the course of many years' visits to the coasts of the island, introduced new articles to their notice, which are still called by their French names. At least seventy French words have become naturalised in Malagasy, and that in a very curious fashion. The young Malagasy now sits upon a *seza*, in front of *látábat-ra*; his rice is brought from the *lákozy*, and he eats his beef with a *fórisét-y*. He wipes his face with a *mósara*, washes his hands with *sávona*, and dries them on a *sáriveta*. He keeps his clothes in a *lálamóra* (armoire), rides forth on his *soavály*, and wears patent leather *bóty*.

The colonisation of Madagascar by the Malay tribes is a topic full of interest, but we know almost nothing about it. It is singular, that in the very first mention made of the island, the celebrated notice of it by Marco Paolo, he should have made a strange mistake, and mixed it with information which belongs to the Somali country around Cape Gardafui. Madagascar has neither elephants nor hippopotami, neither leopards, nor bears,

nor lions. Nevertheless it is evident that the great traveller learned something real about the island, and of that aspect of it which was especially presented to the great sailors of his time, the Arab and Persian traders, whose fathers had visited it for many ages. Sandal-wood is still exported from the northern ports, and the Hindoos carry on "a profitable trade." I do not think that the people whom Fra Mauro speaks of as blown away to the southward were connected with the original settling of Madagascar by the Malays; the accident he describes seems to me of much later date than that settlement, and that it happened to Indian traders who were sailing down the African coast. When they were blown back again, they may have seen shells of the *Cepyonis*, on the sandy terrace at the south-east end of Madagascar, where M. Grandidier found both shells and bones. Fra Mauro does not say that they saw the living birds. Sinbad's additions about the elephants and the jewels are applications of "travellers' tales," and traditions floating about the nautical world long before his day.

That in early times there should have been a Malay immigration into Madagascar is nothing strange. Everything new which we are learning about the Indian Ocean and the China Sea tends to show how boldly and continuously those seas were traversed before the Christian era. Phœnician navigation, both from the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, was ably carried out even in the time of Solomon; and the evidence is accumulating that their colonies, trading settlements, and ports of call were established along all the African and Indian coasts before the Ptolemies had ceased to rule. They had long since learned the regularity of the monsoons, and decided how to employ them. Zanzibar and its neighbourhood had become the head-quarters of the Central African trade, and every year a great fleet crossed the Indian Ocean from the ports of Guzerat and Malabar with the north-east monsoon. What was a twenty days' voyage before a fair and steady breeze to men accustomed to the sea in large vessels of three hundred and eight hundred tons, such as the Alexandrian corn-ships, or the buggaloes of the Gulf of Cutch, with their strong masts, long yard, and huge sails? To me it seems that they mastered the navigation early; its continuity was never broken till Albuquerque and Almeida took it with violence from their hands; and I venture to think that in the Arab merchants of these Eastern seas, with their Khojah friends in Western India, and the "old man of the mountain" at their head, we have the lineal descendants, in blood, and language, and employment, of the Phœnicians of ancient times. Able navigation was not confined to the waters of the Indian Ocean. We know how, before the Christian era, Hindoo mer-

chants and sailors traversed the Bay of Bengal, passed the Straits of Malacca, and had flourishing settlements, temples, and palaces in Báli and the great islands of the Java Sea. The Malay races in those islands had already proved themselves adventurous navigators. We do not know how early they left their mark on all the eastern kingdoms of the Bay of Bengal—on Ceylon, which was to them Pulo Selán, “the island of gems”—and at various points along the coasts of India, as far west as Guzerat. The Chinese, too, have not been behindhand with their well-built vessels, and the compass, which they first employed to direct them. Long, long were they at work before they had formed and perfected the enormous junks which so delighted Marco Paolo, with their well-caulked seams, their fifteen watertight compartments, their fifty cabins, their three hundred sailors, and numerous families of women and children, ready to undertake long coasting voyages, or even to run up the Straits to Ceylon, or visit the three ports of India which they loved, and from which they were driven only four hundred years ago. The very finest of these vessels belonged, not to the northern ports of China, but to the harbours of Siam. Among all the Hindoo and Arab vessels I have seen in Zanzibar, Calcutta, and Bombay, none equalled in size and strength of build the noble Siamese junks which I once found at anchor, after their summer voyage northward, in the bends of the Peiho. It is when these pursuits are in full activity that ability in their management is developed in its highest forms. And what more natural than that, among these Arab, and Siamese, and Malay navigators, there should appear from time to time men of genius to shape out new enterprises, or that among their chiefs and people there should arise another Prince Henry, or Queen Elizabeth, or Ferdinand and Isabella, to foster and encourage them.

Anyhow, there the Malagasy are—a Malay people, following Malay customs, some of them possessing Malay eyes, and hair, and features, and all of them speaking a Malay tongue at the present hour. When they came, where they landed, what hindered their return, we know not. Was some large vessel caught in a furious cyclone and driven ashore? Were the first colonists few or many? Did they communicate with their friends, and get others to join them? Were several settlements established at different points? Was the colonisation continuous? if so, over how many years did it spread? Did Malay navigation extend to the east coast of Africa? and are Zambesi, Kilimány, Mombása, Kiloa, Masambika, and other names there, of Malay origin, as Mr. Freeman suggested?

Judging from modern results, I incline to think that the

original colonisation was not extensive, that the trade was found not to be remunerative, while navigation so far to the south was found to have special perils, and that the connecting link between Madagascar and Great Malaya was early severed. The population has increased but slowly during these long ages. Even now the Betsimisáraka tribes in their five divisions only just exceed a quarter of a million; the scattered Sákálávas, even in their wide and fertile plains, contentious, and ever at feud with one another, cannot exceed half a million. The three Hova divisions are strongest in numbers, in civilisation, and resources generally, and yet amount to less than a million and three-quarters altogether.

Hitherto the various writers on Madagascar, in describing the population, have all followed Mr. Ellis's estimate of forty years ago. That estimate, amounting to 5,500,000, appears to me wholly inapplicable to the present day. It was very largely guess-work, and included districts which had then scarcely been visited by an Englishman. I speak of the population as (to a large extent) I saw it, and I estimate it as follows:—

POPULATION OF MADAGASCAR.

1. BETSIMISÁRAKAS, including				
Sihánakas, 40,000 ; Tanálas, 20,000 ; Tankáys,				
50,000 ; Ikongos, 20,000.	.	.	.	300,000
2. SAKALÁVAS, north and south	.	.	.	500,000
3. HOVAS and cognate tribes:				
Imerina and Vonizongo	.	.	.	1,000,000
Imámo and Mandridrano	.	.	.	100,000
Betafo and Vákin 'Ankárat	.	.	.	100,000
Betsileo	.	.	.	300,000
Ibára, &c.	.	.	.	200,000
				<hr/> 1,700,000
Total	.	.	.	<hr/> 2,500,000

The results at present produced show at least three independent movements in the settlement of the island. The Betsimisárakas have lived a quiet life on the east coast, quite independent of the other tribes, and have quietly spread up the hills into the Tanála, the Sihánaka and Ankáy. And they have preserved in simple fashion the rough tongue of their forefathers in Sumatra. Whether the Sákálávas are one people, or have sprung from more than one colony, north or south, we know not. They have had constant wars with their neighbours above the hills, as well as among themselves. A dread of their courage and skill in war has established between them and those neighbours a no-man's land of fifty or sixty miles in breadth. And their movements and their history seem to have been all along independent of others.

The only traditions and remnants of past history come from the Hovas, who also have been independent, and who, having found opportunities of development not possessed by their fellows, have come to the front among the Malagasy tribes. They tell us how their original settlement was in the south-east of the island; when commenced, how developed, lasting how long, they do not know. Results show that here they became a strong people, and, swarming off, they began to push their way up into the hills. Evidently they entered the upper plateau at its south-east corner; and, while the foremost of the tribe pushed on, other branches, gradually springing from it, and now named Betsileo and Ibara, filled in the districts behind. The advanced Hovas seem to have reached Imerina about 800 years ago. For perhaps 120 years they were on friendly terms with a tribe which they found there, if not actually subject to them.

This tribe they call Vazimba. In the present day they talk of them as their ancestors; in the idolatrous days, they were deified, and their tombs are still the most sacred objects in the country. Happily, the Hova traditions give us the names of seven Vazimba kings. These names are as genuine specimens of Malagasy as the Hova names themselves. The Vazimba tombs are of the shape and structure of the usual Hova tombs, though of rude work and rough stones. So far, therefore, as we know anything about the Vazimba, they were a true Malagasy people—there is nothing African about them.

After a while, the Vazimba and the strangers quarrelled. Contests arose, and the Vazimba were driven out of the province—"to the south-west," says the story, but that means "into the unknown." This superiority of the strangers, says tradition, was due to their use of iron. Whether they had iron while on the coast, whether their fathers had brought and retained any knowledge of its use, or whether they had learned it from their Arab friends and neighbours at Mátitánana, whether they had supplied themselves with iron-headed spears during their march up the Betsileo, or had only produced them, on arriving in Imerina, from the iron hills of Amóronkáy, it is now impossible to say. But in the assertion that they knew the use of iron, while their opponents had only spears of wood, there is nothing improbable.

They made Imerina and all the upper plateau their own; and here, for five hundred years, they settled down, and spread, and grew. They ate, they drank, they planted, they builded, they spun, and they wove. They married, and were given in marriage; they formed the iron hatchet and the iron spade; they cut down the forests, and built houses, well framed, well fitted,

with roofs that successfully shed the rain ; they built villages and towns, surrounded them with deep ditches, and protected them with the cactus hedge. They grew into compact tribes, obedient to their chief and his appointed officers. The members of the tribe met in council, and, in the public assemblies, not only maintained their liberties, but developed the powers and the resources of their mellifluous language. They made war on their neighbours, or defended themselves against attack. Their kings cemented peace by marriage alliances. They made great feasts, and, though no poetry has survived, their orators could recite the traditions of the past, and their assemblies were enlivened with the dance and the song. Great heroes arose among them, like Rapéto and Ralambo, of whom wonderful stories went abroad.

Two hundred and fifty years ago the Malagasy not only began to be better known to the outside world, but light begins to be thrown upon their internal growth and condition. At that period we find the Arab merchants settled at three points on the coast, and a foreign trade steadily carried on. We find them on the east, at two points. At Matitanana they have been settled long. They have written the Malagasy language in Arabic characters; they have taught the tribes the Arabic names of the week-days and the months ; but they have made no converts.

As the first specimens of the rukh's egg were dug up here, it is possible that Sindbad's application of the old story may have been derived from some sailor who had visited the settlement. There was another Arab colony on the island above Tamatave, called by them Nosi-Ibrahim, now known by the French name of I. S^{te} Marie. Both these settlements, owing, doubtless, to the Portuguese invasion of the Eastern Seas, were in a state of decay. The third settlement, at what is now called Mojangá, had done better. It was more easily accessible ; it was nearer to the head-quarters of the Arab trade at Zanzibar ; it was on the lee side of the island, on a splendid bay ; and both the Indian cloth trade and the traffic in slaves were carried on under favourable conditions. More than this, able men among the Arabs had watched their opportunities, had practically usurped the government of the locality, and, as the Sákalávas had no cohesion, they retained their power long. At this time, the trade of the Indian Ocean was breaking up. The Portuguese had built up nothing in the place of the power they had destroyed. The sea swarmed with adventurers. Captain Kyd and other English pirates made Madagascar their head-quarters, and French schemers were planning and contriving settlements on the sea-board, hoping in the end to obtain possession of the island.

From all these quarters the Malagasy people gained no help. Under God's care, in the quiet of the interior, they were making steady progress. It is evident from their traditions, that two hundred and fifty years ago considerable strength was accumulating in the community, broader ideas began to prevail, and efforts at closer union were put forth. Ralámbo stands first in the new line of monarchs, drawing the people onward. To him are attributed great advance in the care of cattle and the establishment of the Fandróana festival. His second son, Andrianjaka, in the days of Cromwell, founded Antanánarivo, on the hill, till then called Iálamánga. Sixty years later (about 1720), Andriamásinavalona, a man of large mind, brought the whole of the Imerina towns under his rule. He was a wise and thoughtful ruler, ready for great enterprises. To him is attributed the greatest engineering work yet executed in the province, the embankments of the river Ikopa, which prevent the annual flooding of the great rice-plain. His name is always mentioned in the public kabáries with profound respect. On his death his kingdom was broken up among his sons, but a hundred years ago all the twelve cities were re-united under Impóin-Imerina, the ablest monarch of that princely line. The border provinces, also, on every side, felt the weight of his strong hand: and his son Radáma, by hard fighting, long marches, and untiring energy, consolidated and extended the dominion on every side. Only the south-west Sákalávas and Ikongo remained independent.

Even then, with all their growing energy, the Malagasy nation was still young. Their cities were growing, the villages were becoming numerous, and, on the whole, peace was maintained. But it was often broken for a time, and the hollow valleys between the royal towns were still swamps full of reeds—a protection to each city against its neighbours. The rice cultivation was extending, but an immense area of the great plain was still occupied by these great reeds, high over head, thick, and all but impassable. It took three days to travel from the present capital to Ambohimanga, twelve miles to the north; the swamps were traversed in canoes, and enemies, with spears, might be encountered at any point, lurking in wait for prey.

In this brief sketch I cannot enter at length into the customs of these tribes. Their ancient warfare with the thin spear and round, hide shield; their cylinder bellows, and clay furnaces for smelting iron; their simple looms and spindles, have all been described and pictured by Mr. Ellis. With one thing, however, I was greatly struck—with their custom of giving over to the dead, in their large stone tombs, the dresses, ornaments, furniture, and possessions which were favourites while they lived.

And I remembered how the Malay tribes of Polynesia and the North American Indians have been accustomed to do the same. Another custom was to exhibit, by rows of cooking stones, or of bullock skulls on poles, the extent to which the funeral feasts had been carried in honour of the dead, and the estimation in which they were held.

The social life of the capital at the beginning of this century shows, in a very striking way, how poor, as compared with other nations, the civilisation of the Malagasy still was. Almost no European improvements had reached them, except the firearms which they had obtained from the coast, and which proved a powerful instrument in securing the consolidation of the kingdom. When Le Sage visited him, Radáma was a thorough Malagasy in his dress, his superstitions, his house, his habits. He was dressed in a lamba, and sat on the floor, to eat, with his hands, out of a silver dish. His people were the same, and when they met Le Sage, and gave him a royal reception as the English envoy, they were covered with silver ornaments, and shouted, and danced, and sang around the strangers with truly barbaric pomp and show. In mental grasp, and in their longing for better things, Radáma and his father were much beyond all this. Radáma was a gentleman in his manners—courteous, considerate, hospitable, and kind. Both kings were wise in council, energetic in action, eloquent in speech. Both were humane in purpose, though, in despotic hastiness, they were often cruel; both were truthful, straightforward, and truly anxious to improve. They were fine illustrations of the weaknesses of Madagascar, as well as of its native strength and native virtues.

Beneath the surface lay many proofs of the backwardness of the people. Life and property were insecure. There was much poverty; few incentives existed to active industry. The country was destitute of roads; systematic travelling and intercourse between the different parts of the country was all but unknown. To me, one of the most instructive illustrations of the state of the island, and of the relation of its people to the world at large, is furnished by an event which occurred at this time on the north-western coast. On more than one occasion, at the end of last century, the Sákáláva tribes had taken advantage of small vessels in calm weather; had seized them, brought them to land, and burnt them for the sake of their copper and iron. Gathering together hundreds of men, they had undertaken occasional expeditions against the Comoro Islands, and harried and robbed their people. But in 1816, they planned a great expedition against the fort of Ibo, near Mozambique, three hundred miles away. They gathered no less than two hundred and fifty canoes, containing 6,250 men, and set out on their expedition.

They were overtaken by a violent hurricane, and only sixty-eight canoes reached the African shore. That was in 1816; yet it reads like a page from "Robinson Crusoe," or a story from the South Sea Islands.

I need not pursue the history. With Radáma we have reached our own times; we have reached modern efforts, modern improvements, modern missions. Often has the later story been written. It is told by Mr. Sibree in his little book, and by Mr. Ellis, in his "Martyr Church," effectively and with brevity. Let us look at the people as they are. At first sight my colleague and I thought them backward; but the more we reflected on the past, on their complete isolation from the great world around them, the simple framework and the small attainments of their natural and social life so late as sixty years ago, the more thoroughly we appreciated the great stride in progress which they have taken in that brief period. Many officers of Radáma's day are still living, with their antiquated coats and antiquated notions, and till very recently they have much hindered change and trammelled advance. But solid progress has been made. It has been made in their outer life; but, best of all, it has been secured in far greater degree in their religious character and in their moral and social habits. Indeed it is a matter for special congratulation and thankfulness that it is that moral improvement which has come first, and that it is so deeply rooted and so widely spread. The external civilisation will follow quite rapidly enough.

In the form of their national life the Malagasy are still a federation of Malay tribes. Each of the greater tribes has numerous subdivisions, at the head of which are the noble families and princes descended from the great chiefs of former ages. Among these, the immediate descendants of the ancient kings of all the sections and cities of old times occupy an honoured place. The feudal rights, dignities, and privileges of these noble clans are carefully maintained, as well as their feudal duties faithfully performed. All the common ranks of the people are enrolled and included among the clients and followers of these inferior chiefs and princes, or among the direct followers of the sovereign. All payments for taxation within the tribes are made in kind, or in feudal service rendered. Officers are remunerated by lands, or by the assignment to them of the service of so many inferior men. Rice, sugar-cane, lambas, firewood, beams for building, bundles of thatch, stones, pork, beef, are all rendered to them and to their superiors as part of that service. Under the law of Rálámbo, the rump of every ox slaughtered in the capital is delivered to the queen. On a message from the queen, asking for any special form of service, local meetings are

held by the clans to arrange as to the mode of distributing it. The term used to denote this system is *fánampóana*, which means, exactly, "service," and it bears all the variety and breadth of meaning which the English word had in feudal times. Though having in it just elements, the system has many weaknesses. It bears heavily upon the skilful, it is unequal in its demands, it represses progress by taking away all stimulus to self-improvement, or to individual enterprise. It keeps society on a dead level, and fosters indolence and indifference. It will only be cured by a fair distribution of the services required in all grades of society, and by a commutation of the service for a fixed money payment.

In regard to legislation and general government, the queen is the head of all the tribes. On great questions, public meetings of the tribes (*kabáries*) are held, discussions take place, and the sovereign pronounces the decision. The sovereign in this way enacts all laws. But they are declared verbally by herself, or some appointed officer (as we saw in the Betsileo Province), in public meeting, and the people and their representatives respond. Judges and magistrates, "heads of hundreds," and so on, are appointed to hear cases and complaints, or to examine criminals: they sit in the open market. Many improvements are coming into these arrangements. The laws have been codified twice by recent sovereigns, and have been put in print. The Malagasy have now a "prime minister," a "commander-in-chief," and a "chief secretary of state," called by the English names. And these officers, with a few others, form a kind of Inner Council, who consult together about public affairs. Formal receptions are held by the court, and affairs are conducted with dignity and good sense.

Apart from their religious instructions, the missionaries of the London Missionary Society have done a great deal to enlarge the general knowledge of the people, and elevate their family and social life. They have given them new instruments for material progress, that have already secured valuable results. They first systematically wrote down the language in the Roman character; and both by learning to write and to employ the press, the government and the people have made abundant use of the new power placed at their command. Mr. Chick, with his huge anvil and muscular arms, astonished the people by the larger forms of iron work which he could produce. Radáma admired him greatly. The native smiths and artisans soon copied their master. Carpenters, builders, masons, and spinners have done the same. Perhaps the most striking improvement which has been accepted on a large scale, is the adoption of the English dress. It took place during our visit, in December,

1873. With the approval of the people, the queen expressed her readiness to receive her subjects at court, dressed in English costume. The transformation was rapid, and the demands made in all directions for hats, bonnets, feathers, sprigs of flowers, and ladies' jackets, was very great. Higher wants than these are being felt, and in due time they will, no doubt, be supplied. Of these, roads are an important item, and the payment for service in money. And it is a happy thing, that by improving and elevating the customs and institutions of the country on their old lines, the stability and safety of the nation are secured.

Things are yet very backward. But the Malagasy are an intelligent people, an orderly people, a loyal people, a religious people. They have learned much already, and they are improving daily. They are governed by a good queen, and by wise and able officers. Under such influences, secular and sacred, Hawaii, with its sixty thousand people, has grown into a Christian nation, and has taken its place in the world's history. Far greater will Madagascar at length become, when elevated, sanctified, and ennobled in all the elements of its social and public life.

DISCUSSION.

MR. GALTON desired to ask a question of some psychological interest. It was stated, that in or about the year 1868 a dancing epidemic, like the Tarantella, and the other strange manias, which are so well described in Hecker's "Epidemics of the Middle Ages," had prevailed in Madagascar. It was also stated that the form and progress of the epidemic presented strict and curious analogies with the others to which he had referred. Could Dr. Mullens corroborate those statements?

MR. DISTANT said, without professing any Malay scholarship, he could but notice another resemblance between the Malagasy and Malay languages besides that of an occasional identity of words. He alluded to the use of symbolical expressions, examples of which, as used in Madagascar, had been given by Dr. Mullens, and recalled many instances of the same kind in the Malay language—such as "Mata-ari," which, denoting the sun, literally meant the eye of the day. The dissimilarity, however, in character seemed very considerable. As we had learned from this paper, there is in the Malagasy character an inherent strength and capacity for what is understood as civilisation, which will enable that people to withstand the shock of introduction of institutions and ideas belonging to a race more advanced in organisation and knowledge. The reverse, however, he believed, applied to the Malays, who have one trait rather strongly marked—a love of money, without a capacity to acquire it. There is scarcely a Malay who could refuse the offer of a loan, even were he not in want of it, and he will mortgage his property, and pay enormous interest for the same. The usual results follow; and if

over the Malays are improved off the earth, "bill discounting" may, in those districts where some of the Chinese and Europeans have flourished, have proved an unobserved, but efficient agent.

Mr. J. PARK HARRISON thought it must be accepted as an anthropological fact that there was intercourse of some sort between Madagascar and the Indian Archipelago and Pacific, at a very early date. Dr. Mullens, however, whilst confirming the views of Ellis, Crawford, Oliver, and Pickering in this respect, differs from all these authorities in upholding a unity of race in the islanders. Distinctive features are daily becoming less conspicuous, and the earliest testimony is generally to be preferred. Not only, then, were there fair and dark islanders, but the lighter tribes are said to have been smaller in stature, and possessed of more perfect features than the others. One of the tribes used to plait the hair (which was black and glossy) in small knots, and manufactured wigs, like the dark races in Sumatra and some of the West Pacific Islands. Their funeral rites were also very similar. Drury, 150 years ago, relates that there were no priests amongst the people with whom he came in contact, but that it was the heads of families that killed animals in sacrifice. It seems probable that vessels of considerable size traded between Arabia and the South of Africa in remote times, and that Madagascar was mainly colonised from that direction. Dr. Pickering traced "Malay features," by actual inspection, from the shores of America (California), through the Pacific and East Indian Islands, to the immediate vicinity of Africa (Madagascar), and even found traces of them in southern Arabia and the borders of the Red Sea. Mr. Crawford thought it possible that some vessel, with Malays on board, was driven to Madagascar by the south-east monsoon, and that the people became incorporated with the islanders.

Dr. MULLENS, in reply, offered the following brief explanations. The Malay word for "two" is *dua*; the Malagasy is *roa*. There may be a connection between the Malay and the Latin in this case, because the Malay language was considerably affected in its original seat by the visits of Hindoo navigators two and three thousand years ago. Many Sanskrit words were introduced into it from that source, but the connection is accidental.—The dancing mania, referred to by Mr. Galton, was a real thing. It occurred in the Central Provinces of Madagascar in 1863, and has been fully described by Dr. Davidson. It was connected with an attempted reaction by the heathen party in favour of idolatry, and was thought by the native Christians to spring from real demoniacal possessions. Dr. Davidson thinks it was not merely an hysterical and artificial epidemic; there was real disease connected with it; fear and imagination did much to spread it. Only the heathen party took the mania; none of the Christians suffered at all. A later revival of it was discouraged by the authorities, and threats of punishment had a powerful effect in bringing it to an end.—The captivity of Drury has many points of interest connected with it. Drury was cabin-boy in an English vessel that was wrecked on the south-west coast of Madagascar, near St. Augustin's Bay. Owing to misunder-

standings, the crew were massacred, but Drury, being young, was saved, and kept in slavery by one of the Sákaláva chiefs. He was in slavery seventeen years, and finally escaped in another vessel. On arriving in England, he published an account of his captivity, drawn from his recollections, and very simply related. We know all about the Sákaláva people, whom he describes. Their language is closely akin to what is usually called Malagasy. They are one of the three chief tribes; they are one of the darker tribes, and have always lived on the coast, in low and feverish districts. I have already spoken of them. M. Grandidier resided at Tolia, near St. Augustin's Bay, and will probably tell us much about it in his forthcoming work.

The Rev. EDGELL WYATT-EDGELL and the PRESIDENT also joined in the discussion.

The following paper was read by the author :

On the QUISSAMA TRIBE of ANGOLA. By J. J. MONTEIRO, Associate of the Royal School of Mines.

I FIRST saw the Quissama tribe in 1859, and I have very often since been on the river Quanza, where for some years steam navigation with Loanda has existed, with the result of a large development of trade on that river and from the interior. The country of Quissama extends for a distance of about 120 miles on the southern bank of the Quanza, from its mouth to Dondo, beyond which place the Falls of Cambambe render it no longer navigable. Of the many tribes of negroes in Angola, that of the Quissamas is, perhaps, the lowest type of any, both physically and mentally. The Portuguese were first on the river about the year 1570, shortly after its discovery by them, and in 1595 they built the Fort at Muxima on the Quissama bank, the ruins of which still exist, and where they have a commandant and half-a-dozen soldiers. There is also here one of the oldest churches in Angola, containing an image of the Virgin Mary, which is greatly venerated, not only by the Quissamas, but by other natives even as far as Loanda. In former times the Portuguese missionaries had also several important stations on the northern bank of the Quanza, at Calumbo, Massangano, Cambambe, &c.; and although the missionaries ceased their labours years ago, the Portuguese have always existed on the river in greater or lesser numbers.

The natives of the northern bank, who speak the Bunda language, as at St. Paul de Loanda, prove to this day the good results of the great work of the former missionaries, being peaceable, and civilised to a considerable degree; mostly all speak Portuguese, and very many even read and write it.