

MADAGASCAR.

PEOPLE AND WAYS OF THE BIG ISLAND.

The Two Leading Tribes—Dress and Diet of the Natives—Peculiar Marriage Customs—"Blood Brotherhood."

FEW people realize the vast area of Madagascar, says a writer in the San Francisco Chronicle. It is the largest island in the world, counting Australia among the continents. Its greatest length is 400 miles, with an average width of 250 miles, and the population is variously estimated at from 1,000,000 to 1,250,000. The general name of the inhabitants is Malagasy, but they are divided into at least forty-five tribes. It is a popular idea that the Malagasys are Africans, as a matter of fact they are Malays, and

All the towns are surrounded by walls of stone or sun-baked clay. The gate of each settlement is covered with a large stone. Inside is a moat, thickly planted with prickly pears. The object is to guard not against surprise, but against theft, and prickly pears form a good protection against bare feet. The natives like to live close to each other for sociability's sake, for there is but little trade done. Each native owns his own rice plot and some stock, and this, with slaves, constitutes their entire wealth. The cattle are of the hump-backed variety and the milk they give is poor. The natives export them for food purposes, the entire eastern coast of Africa being furnished with beef from Madagascar. Occasionally on feast days the natives gorge themselves with beef, but ordinarily they eat little meat. On the high lands the natives raise sheep also and both sheep and cattle have a peculiarity. When the rains cease the grass is very rank and abundant. The sheep and the cattle become very fat,

marriage service when the officiating clergyman asks if any one knows why these two should not be joined together. These public proceedings



A VILLAGE GATE.

consume the greater part of a day. Then the bride's father entertains the messenger and his retinue, and in a day or two the bride starts out for her new home under the escort of the husband's messenger and her father's men. She is carefully guarded during the journey. When she meets her husband it is her first view of him. Their acquaintance with each other is of gradual growth, and usually the Hova family is a stable one. Families are small, and with the birth of each child the name of the parents is changed, until with the birth of the youngest child the name becomes permanent.

There is a peculiar custom of adoption among the Malagasys, called blood brotherhood, which is accomplished by cutting the breasts of both the men who desire to become related, and soaking a piece of cotton cloth in the blood of each. These delicate tokens are then exchanged and swallowed, after which interesting and appetizing process the two are brothers for all purposes, even to the inheritance of property. Strange as it may seem, the white residents of the island are often adopted by the Malagasys in order to facilitate trade.

The dwellings of the tribes differ considerably. The Hovas live in substantial houses built of sun-dried bricks, which they manufacture themselves. These houses have partitions and windows, and are quite comfortable. The Sakalavas live in bamboo and grass houses, square, one-roomed structures, with sloping roofs. The floor is of dirt and fairly swarms with fleas, which are peculiarly ravenous in Madagascar. When the grass house becomes too full of fleas the owner burns it down.

In one corner of the Sakalava but the fire is built, and here all the cooking is done. The furniture is exceedingly primitive. There are no chairs and the bed is formed of bamboo sticks. The natives wear no jewelry and do not care for it. They are all exceedingly avaricious and prefer to have their wealth in money. They have no appreciation of the value of precious stones, and though most of the women wear earrings they are frequently of wood or horn. Personally the natives are very dirty and have a repugnance for water. Besides, they anoint their hair with rancid lard, so that on warm days they are very odorous.

The natives have soft, musical voices, and are ready speakers. They have a printed and a spoken language, which differ almost entirely. Two newspapers are printed on the island, one by the French and one by the English, between whom the rivalry is very keen. Both papers are printed in Malagasy. The natives read them and incline first one way and then the other, as their own interests dictate. The Hovas, who take kindly to the Christian religion, wear the most clothes, and even wear shoes occasionally, but when they begin to pinch the feet they take them off and carry them home in their hands. The Hova women wear a single garment—a square sheet of linen, cotton or silk. The other natives wear a garment much like a gunny sack, only that it is made of woven grass, with holes cut for legs, arms and head.

The Sakalavas bury their dead on the surface of the ground, with a preference for high elevations, and over the body erect a pile of rocks. The Hovas build tombs of masonry, which are always oblong and run east and west. The body is wrapped in a "lanta," or square cloth of silk or grass, and laid in the family vault. It is considered a great honor to be the founder of a family tomb. When a Hova dies the relatives put on dark blue clothes and unbind the hair. The period of active mourning, when all the relatives mourn and wail, lasts one day. Then until the day of the funeral the slaves do the mourning. The funeral does not occur until the rum and oxen provided for by the will of the deceased are entirely consumed. A wealthy Hova always leaves a considerable sum to be expended in a funeral feast. The tomb is usually near the house and the procession thither is exceedingly unceremonious, the only care being to prevent the dead body from coming anywhere near the presence of royalty. When a Hova dies away from home he is buried in a surface grave and later his bones are interred in the family vault.

During the funeral ceremonies the Sakalavas beat drums made of hollow logs with ox hide drawn over the ends. They also fire guns, and express their sorrow—or joy—with noisy demonstrations. These festivities last a week, and during that time the division of property takes place. They bury all the clothes of the deceased with him, as his spear and any personal property which is not valuable. The Betsimasarkas bury their dead on top of the ground in a hollow tree trunk, one end of which is left open to allow the spirit to escape. Rice is scattered about that the spirit may not go hungry.

GOOD ROADS.

DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM OF BETTER HIGHWAYS.

Economy of Good Roads Shown by Europe—Should the National Government Undertake the Work—Cost Per Mile.

IT has been estimated that, in addition to the good roads already possessed by this country, in order that a system equal to the best in Europe may be had, it would be necessary to build or rebuild about one million miles, a reasonable estimate of the cost of which is \$4000 a mile, or \$400,000,000 for the whole country. Enormous as must be the cost of constructing a system of first-class highways, it would appear that, in their present deplorable condition, the roads are expensive almost beyond comparison. According to the census bureau, there were in the country June 1, 1890, 14,976,017 horses, 2,245,936 mules and 49,109 asses. A prominent authority gives twenty-five cents a day as his estimate of the cost of feed for each animal. Taking this as a basis the expense of feeding this vast number for a single day aggregates over \$4,318,900 or more than \$1,576,000,000 in one year.

It is said that on the smooth stone roads of certain European countries a dog can move a heavier load than is drawn on an average in this country by a horse, and that a horse there pulls easily three times as heavy loads as equally good American animals move with difficulty. A conclusion which many, no doubt, will draw from this is that about one-third of the present number of horses would give better service with first-class wagon roads than is now enjoyed. However, in view of the fact that a considerable share of these animals is owned in the cities, where there are more or less of good pavements, the number could be reduced only one-half instead of two-thirds. This would mean a lessening of the feed expense of \$788,000,000 a year.

The average earnings of capital in the United States are about three per cent. On this basis the unnecessary expense of \$788,000,000 in maintaining what would, with good roads, be surplus stock, represents the interest on an average investment of more than \$26,000,000,000. This is more than six times the investment required for the building of 1,000,000 miles of good stone roads at a cost of \$4000 a mile. It is inconceivable to many how the idea can be entertained for a moment that the construction and maintenance of highways can be safely intrusted to individuals or private corporations for gain. Only a little in advance of this, it is declared, however, is the so-called subdistrict road supervisor system. County control, as a rule, shows still a marked improvement over the two plans named, and wherever the States have entered into the field of road building with effective legislation an even greater improvement is noted. But of all roads ever constructed in the United States those which the National Government has built unquestionably are or have been the best.

A striking illustration of the comparative merits of National and local management of public roads is to be found in Germany. The best roads of that country were built by the States which now constitute the Empire while they were yet independent kingdoms, and they were thus the creations of National Governments. Absorbed into the Empire, the States were no longer distinct Nations. What had been National before to them now sunk to the rank of the provincial. The roads had been constantly improved previous to the formation of the Empire. Now narrower and cheaper roads are built, and the highways of the Fatherland, excellent as they are, do not compare favorably with those of France, over which National authority is exercised.

Until recently the inhabitants of cities in this country have generally regarded the building of country roads as an undertaking which belonged to the farmer alone, the expense of which he should bear. Of late, through natural causes and the general agitation of the question, a better understanding has been reached. The mud blockades in the various sections of the country in the last few years have served to bring merchants of towns and smaller cities to a realizing sense of what bad roads mean. Three years ago the merchants of an Ohio city of 30,000 inhabitants lost on account of muddy roads, in two weeks of the holiday season over \$100,000 of trade. Smaller cities and towns, of course, suffered still more in proportion, being more directly dependent upon the trade which the farmers supplied.

The quickest and most satisfactory, and in fact the only sure way to secure good public highways throughout the country, in the opinion of many, is for the National Government to step in and exercise its rightful authority. There exists in the country a strong sentiment adverse to the issuing of additional National bonds. Can the roads be built without running the Government into debt? By building a reasonable portion of the roads each year until all shall have been constructed, and by apportioning the expenses among the Nation, the States and Territories, the counties, and possibly the townships, it is believed it will be found possible to secure the coveted good roads without issuing bonds. Twenty years would be a reasonably short period for the building of 1,000,000 miles of suitable highways. This would require the construction of 50,000 miles per year. Two hundred millions of dollars would be the annual expense. On the

convenient supposition that the Nation at large should bear one-half and that the States and Territories, together with the counties and towns, should bear the balance, the General Government would be compelled to appropriate annually \$100,000,000. This would not represent a very considerable additional burden, for now three-fourths of that amount is expended by the Postal Department on highways. Of the remaining \$25,000,000 a large share, say \$10,000,000, could be wiped out by employing regular army forces on the roads in those sections where their presence is required. As a rule, it may be said, no less than 20,000 men, who now find army life irksome because of its idle monotony, could be employed to good account on the highways.

The majority of the State Governments, as well as the counties and townships, it is believed, could also provide for the expense which they would be expected to bear that the tax burden would not be greatly increased during the period of construction. Moreover, the expense could be made even less onerous by the employment of the thousands of criminals in each commonwealth, and at the same time remove from free labor an objectionable class of competitors.—New York World.

Peculiarities of Animals.

The reason of the shortness of the elephant's neck is that the heart of the animal is so heavy that were it placed at the end of a neck of a length proportionate to the dimensions of that organ in other animals, an almost incalculable amount of muscular force would be necessary to elevate and sustain it. The almost total absence of a neck obviates the difficulty and the trunk serves as a substitute. The uses and advantages of a long neck, peculiarly exemplified in the giraffe, which contains only the same number of vertebral articulations as in the elephant, are in the latter supplied by the trunk or proboscis, by which he is enabled to carry food to his mouth and to drink by suction. This curious organ contains a vast number of muscles variously interlaced, is extremely flexible, endowed with the most exquisite sensibility and the utmost diversity of motion, and compensates amply for the absence of a long neck.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

There is so much variety in the hands of monkeys that a comparison of them with those of man cannot very easily be made, but this comparison may be made with the higher apes, such as the gorilla and chimpanzee, which approach nearest in their structure to ourselves. In the gorilla the thumb is short and does not reach much beyond the bottom of the first joint of the forefinger. It is very restricted in its movements, and the animal can neither twiddle its thumbs nor turn them around till the tips describe a circle. The web between the fingers reaches to the beginning of the second joint, the fingers taper to the tips, and there is a callosity, or pad, on the knuckles on which the animal rests when walking on all fours. In man the thumb reaches to the top of the first joint of the forefinger. Man can "twiddle" his thumb, so that the tip will describe a circle; and he can touch the tips of all his fingers with it; the web between the fingers does not extend beyond the base of the first joint, and there are no pads on the knuckles. The bones in the hand of man and in that of the gorilla are the same in number and in general form. But the thumbs of the monkey have no separate flexor or bending muscle, as those of man have. This is why a monkey always bends his thumb with his fingers and never puts his thumb round an object which he grasps, but always keeps it on the same side as his fingers.

The whiskers of cats and of the cat tribe are exceedingly sensitive, enabling them, when seizing their prey in the dark, to feel its position more acutely. These hairs are supplied through their roots with branches of the same nerves that give sensibility to the lips and that in insects supply their "feelers."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Riding Down a Wolf.

It has often been noticed in India how fast a wolf travels by means of a loping trot that is by no means suggestive of speed. While one gallops after it as hard as a good horse can go, the wolf pursued, never apparently hurrying, lollaps along at a pace that equals that of the following horse. I have heard it said that no horseman ever rode a wolf down; but to this statement I must demur, inasmuch as I have done this thing. Perhaps my wolf was sick.

Be that as it may, I did, when out pigeon-sticking in the Ganges country over against Colong, follow a wolf, and that wolf turned sharply when I closed with it, and the horse I rode (a rare good one) kicked it over with his fore feet, and made the matter of spearing my wolf simplicity itself. One of my companions of that day found explanation of this performance in the fact that I had ridden another man's horse with my own spurs.—Blackwood's Magazine.

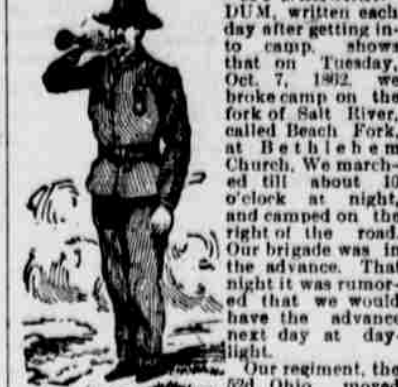
A Woman's Capacity.

The power of love, and the possibility of a woman's intellect, are both exemplified in the case of a naval officer who has devoted several years to an important and complex invention. His girl-wife, through sheer determination to be his chief confidant, has acquired as thorough a knowledge of the invention as he possesses himself, and has him come to her with every trial and attempt, able to be sympathetic and intelligent throughout. Men who sneer at feminine minds should see this wise man lean on that little wife of his.

SOLDIERS' COLUMN

PERRYVILLE.

Did the McCooks and Sheridan Interfere with Buell's Plans?



MY MEMORANDUM, written each day after getting in camp, says that on Tuesday, Oct. 7, 1862, we broke camp on the fork of Salt River, called Beach Fork, and marched to a camp near Church. We marched till about 10 o'clock at night, and camped on the right of the road. Our brigade was in the advance. That night it was rumored that we would have the advance next day at daylight.

Our regiment, the 52d Ohio, moved at 2 o'clock, a. m., followed by the 83d Ill., Col. Moore commanding, Barnett's Battery (I), 2d Ill., with the 8th and 123d Ill. in support. After marching about two miles we filed off to the left of the road and formed line. The 83d Ill. filed off to the right of the road. Skirmishers were thrown forward advanced and about 4 o'clock sharp skirmishing took place in our front and from the bushes and reports the 83d Ill. on our right were known to be hotly engaged.

Our skirmishers drove the rebel pickets to the crest of the hill where the road crosses the hill to Perryville. A scattering artillery fire told about 9 o'clock a. m. that troops were arriving and taking position on our left. We recognized Col. Bennett's 8th Ohio, and noted their position to our left.

About 11 a. m. a veteran Missouri charged and drove the rebels in our front back beyond the spring on our left center and to the left of Perryville, which enabled us to get water, a thing we had not been able to get since about 3 p. m. the day before.

As we came back and reached the brow of the hill where the road crosses I counted 14 of the Missourians lying side by side, each one shot above the eyes. Their comrades said they had all been killed while crawling down through the woods advancing the lines. I shall never forget the broken German one spoke and the remark: "Poor Shake, he's dead too."

Our regiment took position on the crest of the hill on the right of the road. About noon the heavy artillery firing and continuous musketry on our left told that Alex. McCook's Corps were having a hot fight.

About 2 o'clock p. m. the rebels, said to be Hardee's Division, advanced on our front. Barnett's battery, double-shotted with canister, and the regiment poured the musketry into them for all they were worth. When the rebels reached the edge of the cornfield in our front they halted at the fence, then, after a few minutes, broke to the rear.

During the time our regiment was engaged, Col. Dan McCook was going up and down the line cheering the boys. Gen. Sheridan came up and sat on his horse, about 15 or 20 feet to my rear and I talked with Col. Dan McCook and Capt. Barnett. Sheridan's right leg was excited and frequently he rested heavy on the stirrup to stop the "buck ache," as I thought. Later on it all left him and he seemed calm. Though his face was flushed he appeared as though no unusual excitement existed.

Near sundown the lines on our left were charged by the rebels and driven back and Barnett's battery turned their guns to our left rear and gave the charging rebel lines shell in the flank. One shell struck a rebel caisson and blew it up. The rebels broke and retreated, and the field was quiet.

This battle was fought on by Col. Dan McCook and, as far as I am advised, fought by Gens. Sheridan and Alex. McCook, against, as was the general opinion, the judgment of Gen. Buell, commanding the army. I believed the rumor was universal in the army at the time that Gen. Buell's refusal to reinforce his left under McCook lost us the victory, and that Alex. McCook repeatedly called on him for troops during the battle. Gen. Thomas was on Sheridan's right, and awaited orders all day.

In discussing the light since with comrades whose opportunities for knowing the facts were better than my own, they have said that Gen. Buell had planned a Kautsky campaign to concentrate his troops at another point and then force a battle and win a decisive victory. Or, it may be that his orders were to drive Bragg out of Kentucky; and he was then accomplishing this result successfully, with the full assistance of Buell himself, the McCooks and Sheridan had no business to bring on an engagement alone and single handed.—J. R. WONG, in National Tribune.

BLUE EYES AND BULLETS.

Men With Orbs of That Shade Are the Best Marksmen.

The annual report of Lieut. C. J. Collins, Inspector of Small Arms Practice of the Department of Colorado, shows some interesting facts. Nationally, the result of one year's competition shows the following result, with a possible score of 100: Norway 98.18; Austria 91; Switzerland 88.82; Ireland 87.41; France 84; Denmark 83.91; Scotland 80; Germany 79.80; Canada 79.30; Belgium 74; United States 73.75; England 65; Mexico 65; East Indies 65; Sweden 60.35; West Indies 58; Russia 57.78; Italy 55; Holland 45; Wales 35; Australia 10. There were but one Australian and two Welchmen in the competition.

Of the 2,290 officers and enlisted men classified as practicing in the Department 63.77 per cent were born in the United States; of these 82.73 per cent are white and 17.27 colored. Compared as to their merit at the target the whites scored 80.40 and the colored men 50.58.

In his table showing the merits of the troops and their height, men six feet tall and over rank 83.06 per cent, and 5.5 men 69.56. It is almost a steady plan down hill from six feet to five feet five inches.

Men with light blue eyes rank highest, followed in their order by dark blue, slate blue, light brown, dark brown, and black. In the colored troops light blue eyes again stand at the top, but followed in this instance by slate blue, light brown, dark brown, black and dark blue.

There is but one troop of Indians in Gen. McCook's command, being L. of the 2d Cav. This troop not only stands at the head of its regiment for revolver firing, but is at the head of the entire department. This, however, is for troop work. Whites beat them individually.

Pat Recognition.

The Louisville Courier-Journal says that two young men of that city, salesmen in a dry goods store, hired bicycles and took a spin into the country. When they were perhaps ten miles out, they decided to have a race.

One of them got far ahead of the other, and in dashing round a turn ran into a pile of stones. The wheel was demolished, and the rider found himself lying among the spokes.

An aged woman who happened to be passing was met by the second rider.

"My good woman," said he, "have you seen a young man riding a bicycle on ahead?"

"No," said the woman; "but I saw a young man on the road a spell ago who was sittin' on the ground mendin' his umbrellas."



WOMEN WATER-CARRIERS.

though only 300 miles from the African coast the African element is small. The few Africans among them are imported slaves. The Malagasys are Asiatics in appearance, though they have developed in their long separation from the present race manners and characteristics of their own. The theory is that Madagascar was once joined to India, with a people, plants and animals in common. This theory is borne out by the fact that the plants and animals of Madagascar are like those of India and entirely different from those of Africa. The Malagasys have brown skins and some are quite light. The ruling family are of about the same complexion as the lightest skinned Japanese.

There is a wide difference between the tribes of Madagascar. The most numerous tribe comprises about one-third of the population. The tribal name is Sakalava and they are the most savage and warlike of any of the island peoples. They are averse to civilization. They are not cannibals, but they are naturally lazy and stupid. They have a fine physique and average over six feet in height, but they are by far the darkest aborigines, from much mixing with the slave population.

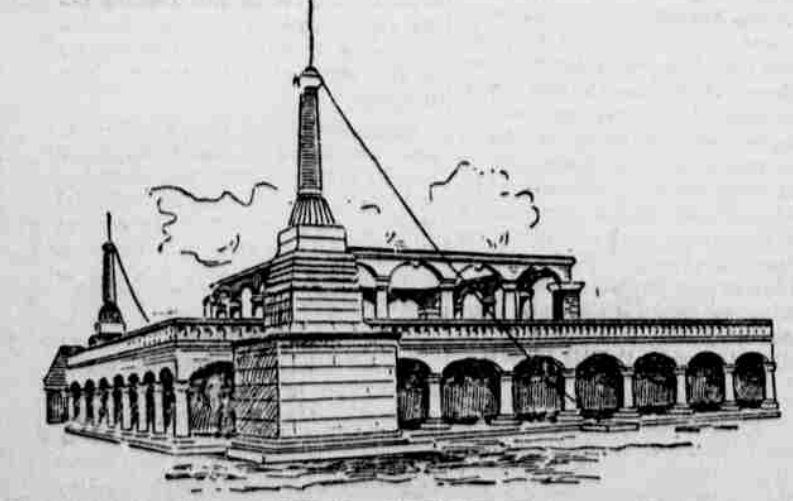
The Hovas, the second largest tribe on the island, comprise about two-ninths of the whole population. They are much smaller than the Sakalavas, averaging only a little above five feet. They have straight, regular features, and take very kindly to civilization. They are intelligent and quick to learn, and have preserved the strong feeling of caste that exists among the natives of India. The Hovas are the ruling tribe, all the Kings and Queens of Madagascar having been Hovas. The Hovas do not mix largely with the other tribes. When a marriage is arranged between a Hova and a member of another tribe, the latter becomes a Hova, unless the barbarian happens to be very wealthy, in which case an impecunious Hova foregoes his titles and glory for the pleasure of enjoying temporal blessings. The Hovas have straight, dark hair, very long, fine and abundant, while the Sakalavas have kinky hair, though it cannot be called woolly. The Hova women wear their hair in two long plaits and it is not uncommon to see these braids reach to the ground. The men wear

but the fat does not distribute itself all over the body as in temperate climates, but goes into the hump which curiously enough is composed entirely of fat. In the sheep the fat all goes to the tail. When the animals are in poor condition these abnormal developments almost disappear.

The staple diet of the natives is boiled rice, served with an herb dressing which leaves a pungent taste in the mouth, like that of half ripe persimmons. They also eat a great deal of fruit, pineapples, oranges, lemons, mangoes, all of which grow wild in the greatest profusion. Chickens run wild all over the island, and the Caucasians eat more chicken than anything else. Potatoes cost five cents apiece and flour and bread are things unknown.

The territory of Madagascar is divided among the tribes, and permission to travel from one tribal territory to another must be obtained from the chiefs. In this way tribal peculiarities are strengthened. For example, the Hovas, who are monogamous, have individual property, which descends to their children in equal shares. The Sakalavas, on the contrary, hold their property on a communistic principle and cling to the feudal idea. They are polygamous, and capture their wives such as the Romans did the Sabines. They are entirely without family feeling, selling both wives and children whenever a buyer presents himself.

On the death of a Sakalava his property reverts to the tribe, and is divided as the village authorities dictate. The marriage customs of the various tribes resemble each other when they can be said to have any marriage ceremony at all. The ceremony is a rather pretty and effective one. The bridegroom usually sends an emissary, and the marriage is for the most part performed by proxy on both sides. The groom sends a messenger and the bride is represented by her father. Often the groom has not met the bride, but he chooses her according to her rank, wealth and reputation of family. The groom's messenger goes to the bride's village and announces his master's name, with all his titles, of which the Malagasys are very fond, and his wish to marry the daughter of such and such a man. Then follows a list of promises, all



TOMB OF A PRIME MINISTER.

their hair close-cropped. The Sakalavas wear their hair in four great knots, like bath buns, or else in a myriad of small, tight braids.

The natives of Madagascar are essentially gregarious. All over the island are clusters of grass houses. An isolated dwelling is indeed a rarity. Villages of 100 people are the smallest, and from this size the towns vary all the way up to Antonanarivo, the capital city, with a population of 100,000.

announced after the manner of a town crier in the open space at the centre of the village. Then the father of the bride steps forward and asks all the inhabitants of the village why he should not give his daughter in marriage to this man, repeating all the titles. Then he goes down through the list of promises and asks why he should not take such a son-in-law who will make such promises. These questions are much like that one in our