

MADAGASCAR.

CUSTOMS AND QUALITIES OF ITS INHABITANTS.

The People of the Big Island are Enlightened and Kind-Living is Cheap—Woman's Position.

An unprejudiced study of the people of Madagascar will show that they have many superior qualities and have made great progress in a short time. They have not enjoyed the influences of civilization around them as have the Japanese nor have there been any efforts worth mentioning to develop the resources of the country. In fact many parts of the great island continent have yet to be explored. That part already explored has convinced the best authorities that Madagascar, in addition to being the third largest island in the world, takes first rank for the variety and magnitude of its resources.

None of the native officials receive any compensation for services rendered to their Government. Their sole reward is rank and honor, which is based on military precedence and conferred by the number of "honors." The first "honor" corresponds to the rank of a private soldier, and is the lowest; the highest is fifteen honors or "dimyambonfony Vonitra," corresponding to the rank of Field Marshal. One of the greatest ambitions of a Hova is to have his honors increased.

The officers of the Government and nobility are not devoid of income by any means. In fact, some of them in that respect would not trade places with a United States Senator who gets \$5000 a year. Every man and woman of rank and title is the proprietor of a vast estate and many slaves and cat-



MADAGASCAR: GIRL CARRYING WATER.

tle. Though slavery exists in Madagascar only in name, the fruits of the labor of these people bring in good returns. In addition to the service the officers are compelled to render their country, they are also expected, and sometimes forced, to contribute a portion of their income to the Government exchequer. For instance, should the Government need money with which to purchase arms for the soldiers, a special tax is levied, and each one is made to pay two cents per head for each slave owned and the same on each head of cattle. Sometimes it happens that on this basis one person will pay on slaves alone nearly \$400. The slaves are captives from rebellious tribes. They are bought and sold, but not abused.

While the women are not given a voice in the affairs of State, excepting, of course, the Queen, yet they are extremely patriotic and loyal in their support of their fatherland. When the last war with France came upon them and they had to buy arms, one woman responded to the call for money with a contribution of \$10,000. This time she had given \$15,000 for the cause. Soldiers in the army do not receive any pay beyond the amount necessary to procure their



NATIVES OF MADAGASCAR.

rations and clothing. The reason for this is simply the poverty of the Government, and that poverty is due directly to the drain upon their resources to pay the indemnity due to France as a result of the last war. Their one source of revenue of any importance is the customs duties, and in order to insure or guarantee the payment of the indemnity these duties are, and have been for several years, under the control of the French.

The Malagasy are fortunate in having at the helm of State a wise and cool-headed statesman who has measured arms with the cleverest diplomats of his time. Admiral Gore-Jones, of the British Navy, had occa-

sion to pay an extended visit to the Court of Imerina. In his notes on his visit he says of the Hova Premier: "He is one of the ablest men I ever met." The ablest diplomats of the French Republic can testify only too well to this, as among those whose seals hang at the Premier's belt is that of the renowned M. Le Myre de Bellefleur of Siam fame. Twice has he defeated at the Court of Imerina.



LOVE AND MUSIC IN MADAGASCAR.

As the Prime Minister is the husband of the Queen as well as Premier, he has every thing pretty much his own way. He owes his position and power to the fact that he is at the head of the army as its Commander-in-Chief.

Ranavalona III., the Queen of the Hovas, is a woman now in her thirty-ninth year. She has reigned wisely and successfully since 1883. Of medium height, graceful in form and carriage, rather sharp featured, complexion dark brown, hair long and straight, she is what may be justly said a fairly pretty woman. Her court is kept up in great splendor. She dresses in Parisian style, except on occasions of the National feast, called "Fandraona," when the Queen and members of the Royal family and nobility appear in their "lamba."

A lamba is similar to the Roman toga. She is proud and independent, but not vain, as some writers have it. Following her example, many of the high classes, and particularly those who are under influences of the missionaries, have adopted the Christian form of marriage, but the masses, cannot in spite of missionary efforts, be turned from their own form. According to their idea a man and a woman become one by mutual consent. And the only ceremony is a feast, to which the respective families and friends attend. A separation is seldom heard of.

It would be difficult to find more domestic happiness anywhere in the world than in Madagascar. The women are always devoted and true.

A yearly tax of twenty-five cents is levied upon every man who has a wife and should he desire to separate from her a fee of \$15 is exacted. Polygamy is no longer practiced. Women do very little housework, however, as nearly every one, even among the poorer classes, owns slaves.

The Hova women are especially clever in fine needle work. Since the establishment of the medical college and the numerous hospitals many of the women are learning to be trained nurses. This work is under the supervision of European instructors.

The increase of all the churches has been remarkable. The Malagasy are devoted to the Methodist Church, and give it generous support.

in the best part of the city can be reared for \$8 a month. Servants can be had for \$1.50 a month, and as for provisions, they cost almost nothing. Porterhouse steak is two cents a pound, chickens are three cents apiece, geese, sixteen cents; eggs, three cents a dozen; potatoes, ten cents a bushel. The average wages paid a native teacher or pastor is from \$5 to \$10 a



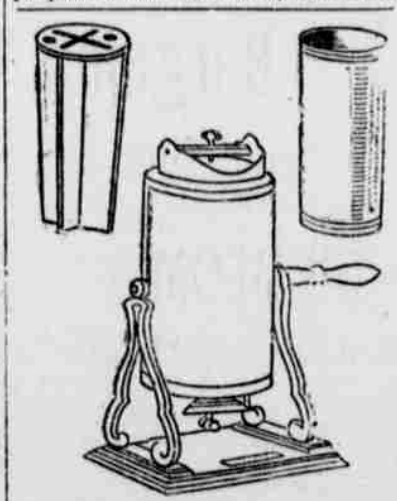
month, and an ordinary servant gets usually \$1.50 to \$2 per month, and his "vary" or rice, amounting to two cents' worth per day. We seldom hear of a want of food.

A stranger traveling through the land will be astonished to find himself the recipient of fowls' eggs, rice and potatoes at every village where he halts. These gifts from the natives are a token of welcome. In addition to this the best house in the village is always given up for the "vazaha" or foreigner.

On the whole the Malagasy are interesting and thrifty, deserving of the sympathy of all civilized Nations in their struggle for the preservation of their fatherland and their independence.

Ice While You Wait.

A small ice machine for the household, which in fifteen minutes will furnish a small cake of pure ice, is being very generally introduced abroad. The water used to obtain pure ice must be distilled or filtered through a reliable germ-proof filter. The apparatus consists of a double sheet-metal cylinder, covered on the outside with a protective layer of asbestos, for the purpose of heat insulation, and hung



MACHINE AND CYLINDERS FOR MAKING ICE.

in sockets by two central pivots. The receptacle, the section of which shows the shape of a cross, is filled with distilled water up to within half an inch from the top, and after the rubber washer and the metal cover are adjusted, it is tightly closed down with a screw. This permits the filling of the space between the double wall of the outer cylinder with a chemical used for generating the cold temperature—in this case ammonium salt. After turning the cylinder around rapidly for fifteen minutes the inner receptacle is withdrawn from the cylinder, held for a moment in boiling hot water, and upon being opened a piece of ice exactly the shape of the inner wall will slide out without trouble. Another round cylinder is provided for the quick cooling of any fluid. The cost of the production, says the *Illustrate Zeitung*, is very small, as the salt may be used over and over again, losing but little of its quality.

Teaching the Bagpipes.

A Highlander, having to teach a drum in his regiment to play the bagpipes, began to instruct him in reading the music in the following way:

"You see that chap with a white, round, open face?" pointing to a semibreve between the lines; "well, he moves slowly from that line to this, while you beat one and take a long blow. Now, if you put a leg on him you make two of him, and he moves twice as fast. If you black his face he runs four times as fast as the white faced one; then, if you bend his knees or tie his legs, he will hop eight times faster than the white faced one."

"Now, when you blow the pipes, remember that the tighter those chaps' legs are tied the faster they run, and the quicker they are sure to dance."—*Glasgow Herald*.

JAUNTY JACKETS.

STYLES FOR WINTER ARE NEAT AND COMFORTABLE.

They are Made to Suit All Tastes and Purposes—Velvet and Fur Trimming—Latest in Women's Hats.

THE London styles for the winter season are very neat, simple and comfortable. They are, if possible, more modest than they were last year. One style, which is very elegant and effective, is a cape of black or dark colored crepon, lined with quilted or padded silk. It is cut very full and wide, and arranged with the folds of the back pleated at each shoulder and in the middle, so as to fall in four solid masses, giving a symmetrical and substantial effect. The high collar and shoulders are edged with black ostrich feather trimming, and from the middle of the shoulders a handsome ornament in black jet or passementerie extends about one foot downward.

Another is a semi-military cape of dark gendarme blue, dark olive or rich sepia, decorated with black cloth applique upon the breast, shoulders and back, with single line of black cloth tipped around the edge of a tall turn down collar, and three straps of black cloth stitched around the lower edge, an inch and a half apart.

It is made of very heavy cloth and is constructed with a flowing front, which conceals the buttons or other fasteners.

winter, very largely used for sleeves in woolen gowns, for bodices to which sleeves like the skirt will be attached,



FUR TRIMMED.

and for whole suits, to say nothing of jackets and wraps.

The rage for velvet will extend even to the head coverings, and, for a time at least, they will all be made of velvet, pushing felt hats far in the background, for fashionable wear. The velvet hats are to be made up "while you wait," and will suit the individual taste, so that no two women will wear hats alike, which is really the proper thing. No woman wants to pay \$20

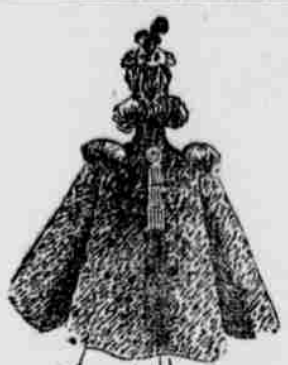


FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

FIG. 1—A CREPON CAPE
FIG. 2—A SERGE JACKET

FIG. 3—A FUR-TRIMMED JACKET
FIG. 4—AN APPLIQUE CAPE.

A third tasty but inexpensive winter jacket, is made of black serge, plain, lined or padded, according to the wearer's taste. It is double breasted, tight fitting around the chest and waist, and rather loose upon the hips, fastened with two large buttons and finished with a turndown collar in black velvet. The lapels are fuller than usual, and when turned down, the lower edge is nearly horizontal and the point almost touches the insertion of the sleeve. The sleeves are pleated at the shoulder.

Another winter jacket, a trifle more expensive but very effective, is made in rich brown cloth, with full balloon sleeves and moderately tight lower sleeves, turned up in neat gauntlets. The collar and lapels are quite large, and roll gracefully from high up in the neck down to the shoulder. Both collar, lapels and edging are trimmed with beaver or other thick fur. The lower hem is left plain, braided in the same color or trimmed with the same kind of fur. In both the jackets there are good, substantial pockets on each side. These are quite large at the opening and much larger within. They are lined with Canton flannel or with fine fur, and enable the wearer to enjoy the man's delight—warm hands on a cold day.

CAPE MUST BE WORN.

Sleeves show no signs of diminishing in size, with the result that capes are again to be worn this winter. Large sleeves must always be enemies to coats, for the latter, be they ever so ample, will necessarily crush the former.

The new capes are longer than those of last season, reaching well below the waist. Much jet is used for their adornment and embroideries of all kinds. An autumn model shown to me was made of black faille worked all over with jet.

The trimming consisted of long tabs of broad ribbon also wrought with jet, and reaching to near the hem of the cloak. The ribbon ends were oval-shaped, and the collar, formed also of ribbon, was very high and framed the face.

POPULARITY OF VELVETS.

Velvet ribbons have the appearance of monopolizing the attention, for a time at least, this winter. Skirts will be more or less trimmed, and velvet ribbon will be largely that trimming. It will be put at the foot in the shape of plain bands, sometimes in graduated width, or in rows of three to

seven. Velvet will be the popular fabric all

for an "imported" bonnet.

Next to velvet, fur will be the popular trimming. An odd fancy for capes is especially designed, it would seem, for the working over of one's old furs. You can take one of the old deep fur capes to the fur shop, and, by the addition of a deep border of velvet, or some sharply contrasting fur, which will be set onto your cape, the bottom of which has been cut in deep notches, you can have an elegant new garment, and one which is pre-eminently stylish, at comparatively small cost.

MILLINERY HINTS.

Hats are still worn fairly on the top of the head, with either the little central curl or the bare forehead showing. If the forehead be high, the hat is set so well down that the start of the division of the hair is covered, and then the locks appear in artistic slant down over the ears and hiding the temples. Then on the larger hats the crop of plumes seems even more luxuriant than it was last winter.



HANDSOME AND STYLISH.

Velvet hats with brim in black and soft velvet tam crowns overhanging a jeweled hand are made jaunty by thrusting a pair of plumes under the eaves of the crown and allowing them to nod beyond the brim, this on both sides. At the back the brim turns up sharply, and through a pair of slashes ends of the jeweled band hang down and make a knot of glitter against the hair.

Henry Bentley, who was for many years identified with telegraphic and telephone enterprises, left nearly \$1,000,000. About twenty-five years ago he was an assistant editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer at \$15 per week.

Consider the Thumb.

A certain class of philosophers assert that character may be determined by the thumb's shape. A vain person is said to fold the thumb under if it is too long for beauty. A grasping person has a long thumb that turns backward like a hook. A good natured person has a short thumb. The artist's hand is a long, delicate one, and the thumb in keeping. An artisan's is short, thick, and stumpy, usually with broken nails, so that to some extent the thumb is an index to occupation. At present it is the only one of the fingers exempt from ring wearing, except by eccentric actors, but for many centuries it was decorated in this matter. Kings were especially given to wearing "thumb rings," and they were still in use at the time of Henry IV. both for ornament and as a "sign manual." The setting was usually a jewel cut in some distinctive design, like a family crest, from which is derived the word "seal ring."

There is an old superstition concerning a woman's thumb. If in closing the hand the thumb folds out of the fingers she will rule her husband. If under, she will be ruled by him. It is hinted that a majority of them fold out.

In grasping, the thumb is opposed to four fingers and exerts just four times as much strength. If you doubt it try to hang to a turning pole without using the thumb. An examination of its muscles will show that they are the largest and strongest in the hand. Injury to this member sets at rest any dispute as to its sovereignty over the other fingers. Tie it up in a rag and you will be convinced.—Chicago Tribune.

An Old Bill of Fare.

Colonel William Gardner, one of Dallas County's best citizens, was a visitor to the city yesterday. He went to California in 1849 and made a fortune out of a restaurant.

He says that when a fellow took soup and did not pay for it before he commenced to eat it a waiter would walk up and stick a large syringe in the soup plate and suck it all up. As soon as the fellow would reach down in his pocket and pull out the money it would be squirted back in the plate again.

As exaggerated as it may sound, the following is a bill of fare that the Colonel served at his restaurant:

Soup—Bean, \$1; oxtail (short), \$1.50.

Roast—Beef, Mexican (prime cut), \$1.50; plain, \$1; tamen, from the States, \$1.50; beef up along, \$1; with one spud (fair size), \$1.25.

Vegetables—Baked beans, plain, 75c.; grassed, \$1; two spuds (fair size), peeled, 75c.

Entrées—Sauerkraut, \$1; bacon, fried, \$1; stuffed, \$1; hash, low grade, 75c.; hash, eighteen carats, \$1.

Game—Codfish balls, 75c.; grizzly roast, \$1; grizzly, fried, 75c.; jackass rabbit (whole), \$1; rice pudding, plain, 75c.; with molasses, \$1; rice pudding with brandy peaches, \$2.

Square meal, \$3, payable in advance.

N. B.—Gold scales at the end of the bar.—Selma (Ala.) Times.

Nice Places to Live.

It must be pleasant living in Honduras, to judge by the report Richard Harding Davis brings back. "There is nothing green that grows in Honduras," he says, "that is not saturated and alive with bugs and all manner of things that creep and crawl and sting and bite. If you walk twenty feet into the bushes you have to be beaten with rods as if you were a dusty carpet, and when the insects have once laid their claws on you you feel at night as if sleeping in a bed with red pepper."

Absorption and Reflection of Colors. It is to the manner in which different colors are absorbed or reflected by a body that its color is due. If white light falls upon a red rose bush, the red alone is reflected from the flower, the other colors being absorbed. The green leaves, on the other hand, absorb the red entirely, and reflect nearly all the green light. A rose in green light or a leaf in red light would appear absolutely black, for in each case the light which the object can reflect is absent.—Inventive Age.

Buzzard Attacks a Train.

A railroad man from Pensacola told a Birmingham (Ala.) Age-Herald reporter that a few nights since a buzzard flew against the headlight of an engine drawing the mail train on the Pensacola and Atlantic Railroad, between Bonifay and Caryville. The large bird struck the glass with such force as to smash it in, and the burner was knocked off the lamp. The oil caught fire and the buzzard was nearly roasted before it was released, which had to be done with a crowbar.

The Boa Constrictor's Strength. The boa constrictor is capable of swallowing deer, calves or men whole. It first crushes its victim's bones by the strength of its folds. It usually catches its prey by hanging from the branch of a tree near the place where the animals go to water, and its destructive powers are pressure—for it has no poison fangs.

Why Elephants Can't Be Liberated. Male elephants are employed, as well as females, in the Indian army, although the latter are preferred. When the former are captured they cannot be liberated again, for in that case the chances of imprisoning other elephants in the same district would be at an end, as they would warn others away.—Detroit Free Press.

The output of the coal mines of India last year was 2,750,000, of which Bengal claims the greatest share, Hyderabad coming second.