

above the sea, several of them having extinct craters and streams of lava, whose surface is in some places as yet unbroken. The hills, valleys, and table-lands of this highland region are healthful, the climate is delightful, the range of the thermometer being only from 40 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit. The scenery is superb and the lands exceedingly fertile. There are two seasons, the rainy and the dry; in the latter the skies are mostly unclouded, but the mountain streams and lakes supply the necessary moisture, and the crops are abundant. In the more sandy plains irrigation, which is easily practiced, gives enormous results.

The watershed is nearer to the east coast than to the west, and while the streams descending the eastern slope of the mountains are mostly mountain torrents, never navigable more than from six to ten miles, those falling into the Mozambique Channel from the western slope are much longer, and some of them, having a circuitous course, are navigable from 80 to 100 miles.

Madagascar is very rich in mineral wealth. Gold, silver, lead, copper, tin, and iron of the best qualities; antimony, plumbago, and other metals and minerals abound. Coal, both anthracite and bituminous, exists in great quantities, and diamonds have been discovered. As the government claims all minerals and metals, these have not been largely worked. Madagascar has no large or ferocious wild animals; its quadrupeds are nearly all peculiar to the island, and consist of many genera and species of lemurs (which belong to the monkey family), several species of ant and other insect-eaters, a small hippopotamus, civet cats, a number of rodents, and the *aye-aye*. There are many reptiles, lizards without number, one species of crocodile, iguanas and geckoes, as well as several pythons, mostly of the American or anaconda type. Birds are numerous, and for the most part are of beautiful plumage. Some of the species are fine song birds, but very few birds of prey. Thirty-three genera and more than 50 species are peculiar to the island, and a somewhat larger number are found in Africa or Polynesia also. Fish are abundant along the coast, and in the rivers there are many peculiar fresh-water species. The domestic animals have been largely introduced. The *flora* of Madagascar is abundant, and there are about 700 out of 3,000 genera and species which are peculiar to the island. Many of its flowers are of wonderful beauty. The trees are largely indigenous and peculiar. Much of the timber is very valuable, and some of the products of the forest are of great commercial importance. Among these are five or six trees and vines producing caoutchouc, some of it said to be the finest in the world, the pepper and the tallow trees, the copal tree, the sago palm, the aloe, many species of figs, the pomegranate, the tamarind, quassia, sugar cane, and other shrubs; the manioc, several species of arrowroot, and many other edible roots and tubers abound, while of the cereals their rice is unsurpassed, and wheat, millet, Indian corn, and barley are largely produced.

*Ethnology and tribal divisions.* The aboriginal race, now nearly or quite extinct, came here from the African coast. They were called *Vaquimba*, and were probably Zulus or Kaffirs. The existing inhabitants are of two affiliated races, both from Polynesia or Eastern Malaysia. The first migration of these, comprising most of the coast and some of the interior tribes, must have come to the island about the beginning of the Christian era. They drove the *Vaquimba* into the interior, but there were extensive inter-marriages between them, and also with the slaves who were brought in great numbers from the East African coast. These tribes, of which the Sakalava