

Fiji islands, appears the Papuan or Melanesian stock, with a distinctly postponing syntax, and a vocabulary that, in its widely divergent forms, exhibits every gradation of influence by the dominant speech through which it has passed, or in the midst of which it now lies. It is generally conceded that these Melanesians were the original inhabitants of the regions in which they are now found, and that those who dwell upon the outskirts of the area have been displaced from their primitive insular abodes by the Malay and Polynesian peoples. The wide extension of the latter from Madagascar to Easter Island, and from Formosa to the Sandwich Islands, indicates maritime adventure of no ordinary kind at some remote period in history. It is true that the Melanesian, with the exception of the Fijians and some other islanders, as at present found in a pent-up, subject, and degraded state, shows no evidence of sea-going powers, but the fact that he is now found as far west as Flores and as far east as Fiji, is proof sufficient that he also was at one time a master of the ocean.

The pure Papuan is, no-doubt, a black,—the negro of the Pacific—while the complexion of the Haidah is fairer than that of most of the coast tribes in the neighbourhood. But the Melanesian, as Wallace, Whitmee and other writers have shown, is of all shades, an evidence, it is thought, of mixed blood, to which also his language testifies. The Alfuros, or Harafuras of Celebes, are such a mixed race, and, according to Durville, quoted by Latham, they are whiter than the Malay inhabitants of the island. Similar to them are the Dyaks and Idayans of Borneo, and the Battas of Sumatra. In their use of large canoes and in their proficiency in carving, as well as in the actual features of their idols and medicine posts, the Fijians claim kindred with the Haidahs, in spite of the difference in colour. The houses of the latter point to an insular origin as well as their maritime habits, but in the matter of dress, equipments, implements and folk-lore, it is hard to institute a comparison, partly from lack of material, partly because the Haidah has largely borrowed from his neighbour, the Tshimsian. Language remains, therefore, the test of their relationship, and that test I have applied in the case of over two hundred words, nouns and pronouns, adjectives and numerals, verbs, adverbs and postpositions. For the Malay-Polynesian and Melanesian languages I have, in addition to dictionaries of the Malay, Tongan, Maori and other dialects, drawn upon the collections of Crawford, Belcher, Wallace, Hale, and many other writers, together with vocabularies found in the transactions of the Anthropological and similar societies. To these must be added Dr. John Fraser's work, entitled "An Australian Language," which really contains grammar and vocabularies of five dialects of that continent. My materials for comparative purposes have not been so complete as I would have desired had time permitted further research, but they are sufficient to make it morally certain that the Haidahs are a Melanesian stock with a considerable Malayan admixture.