

and slavery, chiefly of bankrupt debtors and prisoners of war, a slave trade also being carried on with the Arabs. Their houses were built of hard red clay thatched with grass or rushes; their industries were agriculture, spinning, weaving, and working among metals. A feudal form of government was maintained, the rule being moderate and the people generally law-abiding, although clans were often quarrelling. There seemed to be no special form of worship, and no temples, but idols were recognized and Fetishism prevailed. Persons suspected of witchcraft had to submit to the drinking of taugena water, or "poison ordeal," causing the death of more than one-fourth of those undergoing it.

The population of Madagascar is now estimated to be about 5,000,000. Antananarivo, the capital, containing 100,000 people, has been rebuilt since the introduction of Christianity and is a fine city. Tamatave, the principal port on the east, has a population of 6,000. Most of the early information concerning Madagascar is due to Robert Drury, who was shipwrecked in 1702 and was not restored to his friends till after fifteen years residence among the people.

Soon after the discovery of Madagascar by the Portuguese in 1506, some Romish priests commenced teaching, but the French broke up the Portuguese occupation and the mission. Again in the middle of the 17th century, other priests attempted the propagation of their faith, but using intimidation, they and their followers were put to death.

As early as 1796, the London Missionary Society began to look towards Madagascar as a field for Christian effort, but it was not till 1818 that Revs. S. Bevan and D. Jones arrived at Tamatave, having left their wives and children in Mauritius. As the king was at this time somewhat incensed against the English, it was decided to open work at the coast. Mr. Bragg, an English trader, showed much friendliness, inviting them to his residence and then erecting a mission house, where a school was opened with six pupils. All being auspicious; the two missionaries returned to Mauritius.

for the protection of the natives from their worst enemy; they carried with them brandy, and insisted on being allowed to use its beseeching power in trading with people. The liquor power and the ever troublous Jesuit have been France's leading motors in her assaults on Madagascar, as in many other places. As for the wiping out of the Hova Government, and with it the Protestant religion and the morals of the people, France has tried it several times already, and has gained enough experience not to attempt it without a very serious armament. It seems a pity that no one may stand up for a brave people facing such fearful odds in the cause of patriotism and righteousness."