

TRANSACTIONS  
OF THE  
ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
OF LONDON.

---

VOL. III.

---

NEW SERIES.

---

LONDON:  
PUBLISHED FOR THE ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY,  
BY  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.  
1865.

for several ages past the most prevalent of the languages of Upper India.

I will venture farther to assert that the whole number of Indian words, of whatever description, to be found in the most copious vocabulary of the gypsy language will not be found by any means so great as the number of Latin words which exist in the languages called Celtic, while they fall far short of the number of Sanskrit words to be found in the Malay and Javanese languages. To insist, then, that the gypsies are Hindus, because their dialects contain a few Indian words, is as unreasonable as it would be to say that the Welsh and Irish are Italians, or the Malays Hindus. They are, in reality, a mixture of many nations.

From all that has been stated in the course of this paper, I must come to the conclusion, that the gypsies, when above four centuries ago they first appeared in Western Europe, were already composed of a mixture of many different races, and that the present gypsies are still more mongrel. In the Asiatic portion of their lineage there is probably a small infusion of Hindu blood; but this, I think, is the utmost that can be predicated of their Indian pedigree. Strictly speaking, they are not more Hindus in lineage than they are Persians, Turks, Wallachians, or Europeans; for they are a mixture of all of these, and that in proportions impossible to be ascertained.

#### IV.—*A Day among the Fans.* By Capt. R. F. BURTON.

(Read Feb. 17, 1863).

To the Secretary of the Ethnological Society.

On Board H.M.S. "Griffin," 2nd June, 1862.

SIR,—I make no apology in forwarding to our indulgent Society a few notes touching a people who, during the last season, excited so much curiosity amongst ethnologists—the Fans, or so-called "cannibal" tribes of the Gaboon country.

True, my experience of that people has not been extensive. After a fruitless search for Mr. Gorilla, I returned to the "Baraka Factory," Mr. Bruce Walker's hospitable house on the Gaboon river. When due preparations had been made, I set out at noon, on the 10th April, 1862, in the *Eliza*, a schooner belonging to the establishment. The navigation of the "water of Mpongwe," or Gaboon river, which forks at the island of Inenge-Nenge ("isle-island"), was not a treat. The Nkomo, flowing from the N.N.E., and the Mbokwe, or lesser branch—my line of travel—from the N.E., are equally monotonous, muddy, mangrove-

grown, to say nothing of the mosquitos. After passing several Bákele and Fan villages, whose noisy inmates turned out to cheer and chaff, and after experiencing violent tornados, which this year have been more than usually frequent in the Gaboon country, we anchored at 8.50 p.m. on the 12th April off Máyyá.\* I presently landed, under charge of Mr. Tippet, a most intelligent coloured man from the United States, who acts as native trader to Mr. Walker for ebony and ivory, near the head of the Mbokwe. On the 15th April I walked to the source of the Gaboon river, which rises in a well-wooded sub-chain of the Sierra del Crystal; and on the 17th April I found myself once more in the "Baraka Factory."

My account, therefore, will contain little beyond "first impressions;" first impressions, however, are not to be despised. Veterans are prone to deride Mr. Verdant Green, who, after a week where they have spent years, ventures to record his experiences. They are wrong. Such books as "Eothen" or "The Crescent and the Cross" were written by men upon the wing; no "old resident" could produce such life-like vivid pictures. The longer we remain in a place, I need hardly say, the more our sensations are blunted; and their expression necessarily becomes like a MS. from which, by careful correction, everything salient or interesting is eliminated.

I now return to my "Day amongst the Fans." Arriving at Máyyá, all the guns on board the schooner were double-loaded and discharged, at the instance of Mr. Tippet, who very properly insisted upon this act of African *politesse*. We were answered by the town muskets, which must have contained the charges of old four-pounders. It was dark when, passing through the sable masses that awaited upon the gloomy river-bank their new "merchant," i. e., white man, we proceeded to Mr. Tippet's extensive establishment, where I was duly immured like a queen bee. Accustomed to the frantic noisiness of an African village, my ears, however, here recognised an excess of outbawl, and subsequent experience did not efface this first impression. But noisiness, like curiosity, is a good sign in the barbarian. The lowest tribes are too apathetic to shout about, or to look at anything, however strange to them.

At five a.m. of the next day, after a night with the gnats and rats, I arose and cast my first nearer look upon a Fan village. Like those of the Mpongwe—whom the French call les Gabons, and who are the remnant of our ancient Pongos—it is a single street, about half-a-mile long, formed by two parallel rows of verandahed huts, looking upon a line of yellow clay, which is

\* It is proposed thus to write the very nasal nasals of the Fan language.

broken by three larger huts, palaver or club houses, where the men assemble. The people were far more interesting.

Expecting a large-limbed, black-skinned, and ferocious-looking race, I was astonished to see a finely-made, light-coloured people, of decidedly mild aspect. The features, also, were sub-African; many, if whitened, might pass for Europeans, few were so negroed in type as the Mpongwe, none so negro as the blacks of Guinea or Kongo.

Their aspect, however, is that of a people freshly emerged from the "bush." Many of them point the teeth. The grotesqueness of their *perruquerie* can only be rivalled by the variety of dress and ornament; no two are alike. The hair is not crisply woolly, like that of the coast tribes; in some women it falls below the neck-nape, and the texture is of a superior order. The males wear it in plaits, knobs, and horns, with stiff twists and projections rising suddenly some two inches from the circumjacent scalp in curls: one gentleman had a pigtail hanging to his shoulders, and there confined by the neck of a Bordeaux bottle, instead of a ribbon. Some heads are adorned with tufts, bunches, and circles of plumes, or single feathers, especially of the touraco, an African jay, whose red spoils are a sign of war. Skull-caps of palm leaf plaited and blackened are common in the interior, but are here rare; an imitation, however, is made by plaiting the hair longitudinally from occiput to sinciput, reducing the head to a system of ringlets, and surmounting the poll by a fan-shaped tuft of scarlet-dyed palm-leaf. I noticed a, to me new, fashion of crinal decoration. Two or more threads of hair, proceeding usually from the temples, sometimes from the side, or from the back of the skull, are lengthened with tree fibre, and finished with red and white beads, each in single line, till they fall upon the breast or back. The same is done to the beard, which sprouts in tufts from both sides of the chin; it is not thick, and mustachios are as usual wanting. Allow me to end this part of the subject by assuring you that whatever absurdity in hair may be demanded by Europe, I can supply you to any extent from Africa. Gentlemen who part their locks like Scotch terriers, all down the back, should be grateful to me for this truly sporting offer.

The complexion is, as a rule, *café-au-lait*—the distinctive colour of the African mountaineer, or man from the interior. Some few are very dark; these, however, are of servile origin. There is not much tattooing, the shoulders alone excepted, amongst the men; the "gaudins," however, disfigure themselves with powdered cane-wood, mixed with butternuts, grease, or palm oil, here a luxury. The latter is a custom probably derived from the coast tribes.

Nothing simpler than the toilette. Thongs of goat, wild cat,

or leopard skin gird the waist, and cloth, which rarely appears, is supplied by the spoils of the black monkey (*C. Satanus*) or some other "beef." The national costume, however, is a swallow-tail of fan palm, greasy and ochred, thrust through the waist-belt, and when stiff and new standing bolt upright, when old it depends limply, resembling the Irish peasant's. A similar fan-like formation, the outspread portion worn like the other, the wrong way, decorates the forepart. The ornaments are green and red beads, Loango or red porcelain, and white "pound-beads,"—the latter so called because one pound equals one dollar,—copper wristlets and anklets, and fibre bandages under the different articulations.

All carry arms, generally spears of fantastic and cruel shape, dwarf battleaxes, and curious lotus-shaped knives. The latter have blades broader than they are long, as is the fashion of the Mpongwe; the sheaths are of fibre or leather, are elaborately decorated, and the "chique" is for them to be so tight that the weapon cannot be drawn for five minutes. There are some trail muskets. Bows and arrows are unknown; yet in war the Fans carry large square shields of elephant hide. The mbái or cross-bow, peculiar to this people, who seem to have invented, not to have borrowed it, as might be supposed, from Europe, is only carried when sporting or fighting. I need not describe this instrument, whose form is now familiar to England. Suffice it to remark that the "détente" is simple and ingenious, that the ebe or dwarf bolt, a splint of wood, is always poisoned, and that I never saw a good shot made with the weapon. Most men, also, carry a pliable basket full of splints, which, sharpened, poisoned, and placed upon the path of a barefooted enemy, must somewhat discourage pursuit. Though poor at managing canoes, an art to be learned only in infancy, many villagers affect to walk about with a paddle, like the semi-aquatic Krumen.

In the cool of the morning, Titevanga, king of Máyyá, lectured me upon the short and simple annals of the Fans. They are but lately known to fame, having, within the memory of man, crossed the Sierra del Crystal, or West African Ghauts, and dislodged the less warlike Bakele and Mpongwe. In 1842, few were seen upon the head waters of the Gaboon; now they are known to visit the factories at the mouth of the river. They were accompanied in their westward migration by a kindred tribe, the Osheba, and both were doubtless driven seawards by the pressure of the inner tribes. These are successively, beginning from the west or seaward, the Bátis, the Okáná, the Yefá, and the Sensoba, the latter being the easternmost known. All these races are described as brave, warlike, and hospitable to strangers. I would here draw your attention to a fundamental

error in African ethnology made by Dr. Livingstone, who, deriving all his knowledge from the southern corner of the vast continent, asserts that "no African tribe ever became extinct." The contrary is emphatically the case: nowhere does the selection of species, so to speak, fight more fiercely the battle of life than in maritime Africa. The tenants of the coast are rarely ancient peoples. Demoralised by the contact of European and Asiatic civilisation, and having, like the Turks, less inducement to bar the coast to their inner neighbours than the latter have to secure free transit for their merchandize to the highway of commerce, they degenerate and gradually die out. I will instance, in the present day, the Mpongwe and the Efite, or Old Calabar races. During the last half century, both notably have declined, and they are in a fair way to become extinct or to be merged into other tribes before the year of grace 1900.

The name of this Fan nation deserves correction. The Mpongwe of the Gaboon river know them as Mpáangwe, the Europeans as Panouin or Paouen, corruptions both. They call themselves Pá<sup>w</sup>e, Fá<sup>w</sup>e, and Fá<sup>w</sup>, with a highly nasalised *w*. The plural is Bá-Fá<sup>w</sup>, and Fám in their tongue means a man. The word Fán pronounced after the English fashion would be unintelligible to them. Their tongue, which belongs to the northern or equatorial branch of the great South African family of language, is soft and sweet, a contrast to their harsh voices and *criard* utterances. They are intelligent as regards speech. During my short stay I collected, assisted by Mr. Tippet, a short vocabulary from the chief's son and others. It was subsequently corrected by a comparison with an unpublished MS., the work of the Rev. Mr. Preston, of the A. B. C. F. Mission, an able linguist, who has resided for some time, and has seen some queer adventures, amongst the Fans. If you desire it, it is freely offered to you.

After a bath in the muddy Mbokwe, I returned to the village, and found it in a state of ferment. The sister of a young warrior had lately been killed and "chopped" by the king of a neighbouring Osheba hamlet, "Sán-Kwí," and the brother was urging his friends to up and arm. All the youths seized their weapons; the huge war-drum, the hollowed base of a tree, was set up in the middle of the street, preparations for the week's singing and dancing which inaugurate a campaign were already in hand, and one man gave earnest of bloodshed by spearing a goat, the property of Mr. Tippet. It being my interest that the peace should be kept till our return from the sources of the Gaboon river, I repaired to the palaver house, and lent weight to the advice of my host, who urged these heroes to collect ivory, ebony, and rubber, and not to fight till his stores were full. He concluded by carrying off the goat. After great excitement, the

warriors subsided into a calm, which, however, was broken two days afterwards by the murder of a villager. The suspected lover of a woman belonging to a settlement higher up the Mbokwe river went to visit her, and was at once speared by the "injured husband."

The Fans, like most African tribes, with whom fighting is our fox hunting, live in a chronic state of ten days' war. Such is the case even where the slave trade has never been known. Battles, however, are not bloody; after the fall of two or three warriors they are dragged off to be devoured, and their friends disperse. If the whole body cannot be removed, the victors content themselves with a "gigot" or two to make soup. The cannibalism of the Fans is by no means remarkable, limited as it is to the consumption of slain enemies; the practice extends sporadically from the Nun to the Kongo, and how much further south I cannot at present say. In the Niger and the Brass the people do not conceal it; in Bonny I have seen all but the act of eating; it is execrated by the Old Kalabaresi, whilst practised by their Ibo neighbours to the north west; the Duallas of Cameroons number it amongst their "country fashions;" and, though the Mpongwe eschew the chimpanzee, the Fans invariably eat their foes.

Still no trace of the practice was seen at Máyyá<sup>n</sup>. This, however, was not caused by its civilisation—the Rev. M. Walker and other excellent authorities agree that it is a rare incident even in the wildest parts—but by want of opportunity. The corpse when brought in is carried to a hut in the outskirts, and is secretly eaten by the men only, the cooking pots being finally broken. No joint of man is ever seen in the settlements; the people shouted with laughter when a certain question was asked. The sick are not devoured. The dead are decently interred, except slaves, who as usual are thrown into the forest. The chiefs, stretched at full length and wrapped in a mat, are secretly buried, the object being to prevent some strong fetish in medicine being made by enemies from various parts of the body. In some tribes those of the same family are interred near one another; the commonalty are put singly under ground. During my peregrinations, I never saw even a skull. Mr. Tippet, who had lived three years with the people, only knew three cases of anthropophagy.

Yet the Fan character has its ferocious side. Prisoners are tortured with horrible ferocity, and children may be seen licking the blood from the ground. It is a curious ethnological consideration, this peculiar development of destructiveness in the African's brain. Cruelty seems to be with him a necessary of life; all his highest enjoyments are connected with causing pain and inflicting death. His religious rites—how different from the

Hindus!—are ever causelessly bloody. As an instance, take the Efite or Old Calabarese. For two hundred years they have had intercourse with Europeans—who certainly would not encourage these profitless horrors—yet no savages could show such an extent of ferocity as the six thousand wretched remnants of the race. I cannot believe this abnormal cruelty to be the mere result of uncivilisation. It appears to me rather the work of an arrested development, which leaves to the man all the bloodthirstiness of the carnivora.

After the palaver had been temporarily settled, I wandered through the settlement, and sketched the huts. One village contains about four hundred souls, and throughout the country the maximum would be four thousand, the minimum a hundred or so. The Fan houses are most like those of the Mpongwe, in fact after the fashion that begins at Cameroon river; they are not, however, so neat and clean as those of the seaboard. A thatching, whose long ears form deep verandahs facing towards the one street, surmounts neat walls of split bamboo (*P. vini-fera*), planted upon raised platforms of earth. The usual two doors make the hut a thoroughfare; and, windows being absent, the ceiling is painted like coal tar by soot. The walls are garnished with weapons and nets, in making these they are equally expert; and the furniture consists of mats, cooking utensils, logs of wood for pillows and seats, and dwarf stools cut out of a solid block. The only illumination is by a torch such as the Mpongwe use—a yard of acacia gum, mixed with and bound up in dried plaintain leaves. The sexes are not separated, but the men, as in Unyamwezi, to quote no other place, are fond of their clubs, whilst the women are rarely allowed to be idle in the house; the latter must fetch water, nurse the baby, and cook, while the former talk, smoke, and doze. The number of the children makes the hut contrast favourably with the dreary home of the debauched Mpongwe, who puts no question provided his wife presents him with a child.

The dietary of these barbarians would astonish the half-starved sons of civilisation. When shall we realise the fact, that the great thing needful to the prosperity of England is not almshouses and hospitals, and private charities, but the establishment—first advocated by Mr. Carlyle—of a regular and efficient emigration? The crassest ignorance only prevents the listless pauper, the frozen-out mechanic, and the wretched agricultural labourer, from quitting a scene of misery, and from finding, scattered over earth's surface, spots where the memory of privations endured in the hole which he calls his home would make his exile a paradise. A national system of emigration is our present great want. We expect from it not the pilgrimage of a few

solitary hands who—nostalgia is a more common disease than men suppose—are ever pining for the past, but the exodus of little villages, which, like those of the Hebrides in the last century, bore with them to their new world their Lares and Penates, their wives, families, and friends.

Few of the Fans lack fish, fowl, or flesh—dogs or goats, mutton or game—once a day, many eat it twice, and they have a name for the craving felt after a short abstinence from animal food. Cattle are as yet unknown; the woods, however, supply the wild buffalo in numbers. The banana, planted with a careless hand, affords the staff of life, besides thatch, fuel, and fibre for nets and lines. The palm tree gives building materials, oil, and wine. Milk is unknown; butter, however, is produced by the nje, a towering butyraceous tree, differing from that which bears the shea-nut; and, when bread is wanted, maize rises almost spontaneously. The bush is cut at the end, and burned before the beginning of the rains, leaving the land ready for agriculture, almost without using the hoe. In the “middle dries,” from June to September, the villagers sally forth to hunt the elephants, whose spoils bring various luxuries from the coast. They are even gourmands. Lately, before my arrival, all the people had turned out for the “ndiká” season, during which they will not do anything else but gather. The “ndiká” is the fruit of a wild mango tree (*M. gabonensis*), and forms the “one sauce” of the Fans. The kernels, extracted from the stones, are toasted like coffee, pounded, and poured into a mould of basket work, lined with plaintain leaves. This cheese is scraped, and added to boiling meat and vegetables; it forms a pleasant relish for the tasteless plantain. It sells for a half dollar at the factories, and the French export it to adulterate chocolate, which in appearance it somewhat resembles. I am ready to supply you with a specimen whenever you indent upon me.

After the daily siesta, which lasted till three p.m., Mr. Tippet begged me to put in an appearance, as a solemn dance, in which the king's eldest daughter joined, was being performed in honour of the white visitor. A chair was placed for me in the verandah, and I proceeded to the exterior study of Fan womanhood. Whilst the men are thin and *élancé*, their partners are usually short and stout—

“Her stature tall; I hate a dumpy woman”

is a point upon which most of us agree with his lordship. This peculiar breadth of face and person probably result from hard work and good fare. I could not bring myself to admire Gondebiyá, the princess, although she was in the height of Fan fashion: what is grotesque in one appears ugly in the other sex. The

king's daughter was married, fat, and thirty: her charms were on the wane, and the system of circles composing her *personnel* had a tremulous and a gravitating tendency. She danced with all her might, and her countenance preserved a great seriousness. Her dress consisted of leaves covering the hair-horns; a pigtail lashed with brass wire; various necklaces of large red and white, pink and blue beads; a leaf confined to the upper arm by a string, and heavy brass and copper wristlets and anklets—the *parure* of the great in these lands. The rest of the toilette was a dwarf swallow-tail, and an apron of greasy and reddened tree bark, kept in position by five lines of cowries acting as cestus; the body was also modestly invested in a thin pattern of tattoo, and a gauze work of grease and cam wood. The other performers were, of course, less brilliantly equipped; all, however, had rings on the fingers and toes, the arms, legs, and ankles. A common decoration was a bunch of seven or eight long ringlets, not unlike the *queux des rats* still affected by the old-fashioned English woman, but prolonged to the bosom by stringings of alternate white and red beads; others limited this ornament to two tails, depending from the temples at the part where horns would grow. Amongst them all I saw but one well-formed bosom; many had faces sufficiently piquant, the figure, however, though full, wanted firmness. The men wore red feathers, but carried no arms; each had his garters and armlets, like the Arabs' "hibas," of plaited palm fibre, tightened by little brass cross-bars.

The form of dance was a circular procession round the princess, who agitated herself in the centre; it reminded me much of Mr. Catlin. To the sound of o-o-o-h! all clapped hands, stamped, and shuffled forwards, moving the body from the hips downwards, whilst all above was stationary and smileless as a French demoielle in her favourite enjoyment. At times, when the king condescended to "show his agility," the uproar became deafening. The orchestra consisted of two men, sitting opposite each other. One performed upon a "caisson," a log of hollowed wood with an upper slit; the other used the national *mánjá*. This is the prototype of the "harmonicon;" it is made of seven or eight hard sticks, pinned with bamboo-splints to transverse stems of plain-tain reposing upon the ground. Like the former instrument, it is thumped upon by things like tent-pegs. The *grande caisse*, or large drum, four feet tall, skin-covered, and fancifully carved, stood at some distance.

Highly gratified with the honour, but somewhat overpowered by the presence, and already feeling that awful scourge, the sand-fly, I retired, after an hour's review, leaving the dance to endure till midnight. The rest of my day, and the week following, was

devoted to the study of this quaint people, and these are the results.

Those who have dealings with the Fans universally prefer them for honesty and manliness to the Mpongwe and the other coast races. They have not had time to be thoroughly corrupted, to lose all the lesser without acquiring any of the greater virtues. Chastity is still known amongst them, the marriage tie has some significance, and they will fight about women. It is an insult to call a Fan loon or coward, and he waxes wrath if his mother be abused. Like all tribes in West Africa, they are but moderately brave. They are fond of intoxication, but not yet broken to ardent spirits; I have seen a man rolling upon the ground, and licking the yellow clayey earth like one in the convulsions of death-thirst; this was the effect of a glass of trade rum. They would willingly traffic for salt and beads; the wretched custom of the coast—the whole coast—is to supply vile alcohols, arms, and ammunition. How men who read their Bibles and attend their chapels regularly can reconcile this abomination to their consciences I cannot say. May the day soon come when unanimity will enable the West African merchants to abstain from living upon the lives of those who pour wealth into their coffers. The Fans plant their own tobacco, and care little for the stuff imported; they also manufacture their pipe-bowls, and are not ignorant of the use of diamba-mashish. They will suck salt as children do lollipops, but they care little for sugar. They breakfast (*kidiáshe*) at six a.m., dine (*amos*) at noon, sup (*gogashe*) at sunset, and eat if they can all day. They are good huntsmen, who fear not the elephant (*nzok*), hippopotamus, (*nzok á mádzim*), or the gorilla (*njí*). They are cunning workmen in iron, which is their wealth. Their money is a bundle of dwarf rods, shaped like horse fleams, a coinage familiar to old travellers in West Africa; and of this Spartan currency ten equals sixpence. The usual trade medium is a brass rod, of which two equals one franc, and of the copper three equal two francs. *Iloki*, or witchcraft, has not much power over them. In Africa, however, as in Australia, no man, however old, dies a natural death; his friends will certainly find a supernatural cause for it. The general salutation of the Fans is *mboláne*, and the reply *án*.

The nation is divided, as usual, into many ayeng or tribes, who mostly occupy different locations. The principal names in the vicinity visited by me are—

Máyyán	Esobá
Lálá	Esánvímá
Sámkiyá	Esonzel
Sákulá	Wámásí

The names of the men whom I met were—

Nál	Mábuná
Ngos	Njembe
Titevángá	Njembekona
Jembeshoná	Uwá

The names of women are—

Abáde	Menalenguna
Nyendongo	Abome
Gondebiya	Nyágondábyámá

They have their own names for the neighbouring tribes and places, *e. g.*, the Mpongwe are called "Bayok," the Bakele are "Ngon," and the Shekyáni "Besek;" whilst the Gaboon river is called "Aboká." They have no vocables corresponding with our distinctive names of week-days, weeks, months, or years. "Amos" is any day, opposed to "alúshe," a night. "Suká," or "suká suá" is the rainy season, "isob," the "little dries," "oyon," the "long dries," *alias* a year. The "engon," or moon, is of course used to express a month. "Mwásá" is yesterday, "erum," to-day, "kiriya," to-morrow, "ozán," the day after to-morrow.

The only specimen of the language that I can now find time to quote is its numeralogy. It need hardly, however, be remarked to the Ethnological Society how instructive and how significant numbers are:—

1	Fon (with strong guttural aspirate)	7	Sángwá
2	Be	8	Wám
3	Láre	9	Ebú
4	Nne	10	Abom
5	Tánu	11	Abom ná fon
6	Sám	100	Kámá

On the 14th of April I went, in company with Mr. Tippet and his wives, to the head waters of the Mbokwe river. After descending the stream for a short distance, we turned into the Londo creek, one of its northern influents, and presently, after losing sight of mangrove for the first time, we arrived at the village of Fakanjok. Thence, having obtained carriers, we marched through a dense bush, cut by streamlets and a few plantations. After a six miles' walk over stiff wet clay, we bivouacked for the night in a tall but thin forest. In early morning a tornado from the north-east broke over us—a curious crash sounded around me; and I found that the upper half of a tree had fallen alongside, grazing my hammock. When the rain subsided, we ascended the little hill "Beka," where, according to the guides, Nkomo and Mbokwe, the two main forks of the Gaboon, arise; and on the same evening, after thirteen miles work, of which three were by water, we reached home at Máyyá". Our return down the river was enlivened by glimpses of far blue hills, rising in lumpy and detached masses to the east. It is probably a sub-range of the Sierra del Crystal, which native

travellers described to me as a broken line of rocky and barren acicular mountains, tall, gravelly, waterless, and lying about five days' journey beyond the wooded hills. Early in the morning of Thursday, 17th April, the *Eliza* was lying off Mr. Walker's factory, and I was welcomed with the usual hospitality by Mr. Hogg, then in charge. I will conclude this brief record of first impressions amongst the Fans with tendering my best thanks to that gentleman for his many little friendly offices, without which travelling in these regions is rather a toil than a pleasure.

R. F. BURTON.

V.—*The Brain and the Skull in some of the Families of Man.*

By L. J. BEALE, M.R.C.S., F.R.S.L.

(Read March 3rd, 1863).

IN calling the attention of the Society to this subject, I am afraid I must go over ground that is familiar to all; but I have heard repeated in this room opinions so opposed to the utility of studying the various form of the skull, as a test of race and as a means of classifying the families of man, that I propose examining the subject solely with a view of determining whether anything can be learned from the size and shape of the brain and skull that may help us in the more important knowledge of the mind and character of a race, and enable us to form an opinion whether the families which have always inhabited the large divisions of the globe so differ in their sensibilities, their conceptions, and their intellectual powers, as to warrant the belief that their skulls are not only different now, but have ever been so from their creation.

It is unnecessary to say much about the relative size of the brain and skull: I believe all physiologists will allow that there is sufficient parallelism between the surface of the brain and the surface of the skull to say that the shape of the one may practically be taken as the shape of the other. That the skull is moulded on the brain; that in childhood, as the brain grows, the deposit of new bone is formed to suit the growth of brain. Moreover, when, in addition to growth of brain, we have a diseased condition, and an excess of fluid in the cavities of the brain, the skull accommodates itself to the morbid deposit, and becomes preternaturally large. So cases are recorded where the skull has increased in size at its anterior part in a few years, while the individual has been entirely devoted to some special studies. That the brain case is a perfect mould of the brain we are not warranted in asserting, and we must admit that the brain itself may