

ETHNOLOGY
AND
PHRENOLOGY,
AS AN AID TO
THE HISTORIAN.

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THE MALAYS AND POLYNESIANS.

ERE concluding our remarks on the Turanian or Physical race of the North, we must cursorily glance at a lingually allied, although in some measure organically different type: the Malays and their insular congeners, both of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. The Malay, as both his language and structure indicate, is largely Mongolic—rests, in short, on a Mongolic basis. Yet there are specialities attaching to him, both mentally and corporeally, which a pure Turanian descent could not satisfactorily explain. He is more active and enterprising, more subtle and excitable, more feline and less ursine than we should expect in a pure Mongol, and correspondently he is more gracefully built, with less breadth of face and more altitude of cranium. If we do not raise him, as many Ethnologists have done, into a distinct race, we must admit that he is of mixed

blood, a permanent cross, but between what stocks? We reply, all three. At the southernmost point of Asia, attached as a peninsula to the Turanian realm of the farther East, yet extending far into the Indian Ocean, the aborigines of whose innumerable isles are, as we know, low caste Negroes of the rudest type, Malaya is at the geographical point of junction between the great northern and southern race; but it is also at no great distance from India, nor at an immeasurable remove from Arabia, while its harbours would prove of old, as they do now, an irresistible attraction to the more enterprising mariners and merchants of either of the Caucasianized races inhabiting these neighbouring countries. From the Malayan type and character, however, we incline to a decided preponderance of Indian blood, and this, too, from the southern rather than the northern, and more properly Aryan, portion of the great Eastern Peninsula.

The Malay has not been moralized by his Caucasian elements; and he has only been intellectualized so far as to render him an astute thief and an accomplished swindler. His invention is too often devoted to lies, and his courage to murder. He has the cruelty of the Mongol without his strength, and the policy of the Caucasian without his honour. He is brave yet not chivalrous, and able yet utterly unprincipled. He has the gross sensuality of the material without the taste of the intellectual man. Suspicious himself and untrusted by others, he is at once the tiger and the serpent of the East. Everything about him indicates that he is descended from the inferior elements of other types; not from the robust and manly Nomad of the North, but the effete semi-barbarian of the South; not from the affectionate and docile Negro of the African Continent,

but the cannibal savage of the isles; not from the cultured Brahmin or gallant Rajpoot, but the low caste Lascar, and perhaps the outcast Pariah. Such is the Malay of the Peninsula, a southern Turanian, modified by low Caucasian influences, which have acuminated his faculties without exalting his sentiments. In the islands of the Archipelago, the coast type is more nearly Indian, with a purely Negroid element occasionally in the jungles and mountains of the centre, the latter, as already observed, being the primitive type of these tropical regions, and we may add, of a large portion of Polynesia, on which, however, a later Malayan immigration has been obviously induced. In Madagascar we also have Malayan influences, undoubtedly mingled with and invigorated by Arabian blood; the organic basis, however, as might be supposed from geographical position, being rather African than Asiatic. We have here, then, the southern Oceanic variety of the Mongolic man, who also looms out upon us under a somewhat maritime character in the far north, among the Ichthyophagi of the Arctic Seas. These, however, are rather fishermen than sailors. The mariner of Mongolia is the Malay, who, as a result of his seafaring proclivities, has extended his family of languages over a wider latitude than any other earth-dweller except the Anglo-Saxon, his heir-apparent throughout the wide-spread domain of the islanded Pacific.

And why, then, with such extensive possessions and such enviable opportunities has not this eastern seaman reared up an Oriental Tyre, an Asian Carthage, a Mongolic Venice, or a Malayan Britain? Had he not the industry of China and the wealth of India to stimulate his maritime energy and repay his commercial enterprize? What prevented his being the carrier of the East, the merchant

prince of the Orient? Why has he descended from the inspiring possibilities of so grand a career to the contemptible pursuits of a petty pirate, living on the occasional plunder of that very commerce, whose golden dower might once have been his own? Let the statesman and the political economist reply each according to his craft, our answer is, "Look at his organization, and in its imperfections read the cause of his failure." Let us not, however, be too hard upon this daring voyager. He has largely dominated and, in many instances, expelled or absorbed the ruder Negro. He has exalted the type of the Eastern Seas, and thus, as a pioneer, prepared the way for a higher race than his own, and opened the path to a career on which, nevertheless, Nature had forbidden him to enter. He constitutes a step onwards; and Providence is now obviously about to take another, by the introduction of the European, under whose higher leadership, the isles and peninsulas of the farther East will gradually fulfil the glorious possibilities inherent in their position.

We have now contemplated the Turanian race in all their varieties of manifestation and in all their grades of development, as the barbarous Nomads of the northern wilderness and the settled agriculturists of civilized empires. We have seen them as simple shepherds on their native plains, and as lordly possessors of the time-honoured seats of ancient Caucasian culture and refinement. We have traced them in all their grades of lingual advancement, from the monosyllabic Chinese and the Tungusic hordes, the latter devoid of the very elements of grammar, up to the Finns, who have fifteen cases in their declension, and the Turks, who have refinements in conjugation that laugh

the voices, moods, and tenses of Greek and Sanscrit to utter scorn. We have seen them shut out from disturbance, yet with perfect freedom for normal growth, on the vast yet morally isolated expanses of the Eastern Continent, and beheld them as mariners in possession of the ocean from Madagascar to the American coast of the Pacific. And, lastly, we have observed them under every degree of latitude from the Frigid to the Torrid Zone, and therefore under the variously evocative influences of every kind of climate, from the Arctic to the Equatorial regions of the earth, invigorated by the snows of the North and refined by the suns of the South. There has been surely nothing wanted in their physical environment to the effective development of their moral being, if we except geographical relationship to the great current of mundane events. Nor can it be said that they were defective in numerical strength; for in this as well as in extent of territory they have always far transcended the superior race. And, lastly, judging by monuments, tradition, and history, it would appear that they were first in possession of the stage, that they had countless ages of opportunity ere the Caucasian appeared as their rival. And yet, with all these advantages, what have they accomplished? Where is the religion they have founded, the philosophy they have discovered, the science they have elaborated, the art they have practised, or the literature they have originated? Where is the profound wisdom which they have bequeathed in their thoughts, or the ennobling heroism of which they have left an example in their actions? When we would praise them, it is as apt scholars and obedient children, by saying not what they have taught, but what they have acquired—not by enumerating the blessings they have

conferred, but by stating the benefits they have received. As leaders, they have everywhere and under all the manifold phases of thought and action proved a miserable failure; and our only hope of them is, that as docile pupils they may hereafter, as heretofore, prove easily receptive of our doctrines and readily acquiescent in our practices.

And why is this so? Why has this numerous and extensively diffused family of mankind everywhere demonstrated its essentially immature and generally infantile character? A phenomenon so permanent cannot be exceptional, or in any sense accidental; it must have resulted from a law. The Mongol, in short, cannot have occupied his inferior moral and intellectual position solely or largely from unfavourable circumstances without, but principally, if not wholly, from deficiencies within. These deficiencies Ethnology recognises and Phrenology explains. They are organic. They consist primarily in a coarse and imperfectly developed nervous system, accompanied necessarily by a rude physical structure, and eventuating in a mental constitution unsuited to the nobler forms of individual culture and the higher phases of collective civilization. The Mongol is ethnically of a low type; he is phrenologically of an inferior character. His fortune and his structure are correspondent. His manifestations are in perfect accordance with his organization. He is what Ethnology would expect and what Phrenology would define, not only as possible but inevitable. Here, then, at least, is an instance in which these sciences appear to reveal principles that underlie all those conditions which political economists deem essential to the well-being of a state, and all those events on which historians dilate as conducive to the prosperity and greatness, or the decay and destruction of nations.