

JOURNAL  
OF THE  
BOMBAY BRANCH  
OF THE  
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

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JULY, 1847.

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ART. 1.—*Notes on the Mahrah Tribe of Southern Arabia, with a Vocabulary of their language, to which are appended additional Observations on the Gara Tribe.* By Assistant Surgeon H. J. CARTER, Bombay Establishment.

In presenting to the Society this vocabulary of the Mahrah dialect, I regret that I have so little information to add to it, concerning the manners and habits of the people by whom it is spoken.

The Mahrah tribe (مهراة), descended from the ancient Hamyari of Hadramaut, occupy an extent of country exceeding that of any other tribe in the southeastern part of Arabia. The limits of their coast are generally allowed to be the opening of the great Wadi Masilah, on the S. W, in 51° 13' E. Long. and the town of Damköt (دمقوت), in the bay of Al Kamar, on the N. E, in 52° 47' E. Long., giving them a coast-line of about 135 miles; thus, while we have it in our power accurately to determine their maritime boundary, we know little or nothing of the extent of their country inland, though we may justly infer that the tribe is spread over an immense area, for, if we talk of entering Hadramaut by Makalla, the people of that place tell us we shall be assailed by the

Mahrah tribes on our way, and if we ask the inhabitants of Marbât, three hundred and sixty miles north-east of Makalla, what inland tribe comes next to the Beni Gara, their answer again is, the "Mahrah," while the Mahrahs themselves affirm that the divisions of their tribe extend to the confines of Hadramaut.

Like the other great tribes, they have their divisions, their subdivisions, and their families or *bâits* (بيت); but being so numerous and spread over such a vast extent of country, they are as much at war with each other, as if each division and subdivision were an independent tribe of itself.

In stature the Mahrahs are generally undersized, and when compared with their eastern neighbours, the Beni Gara, may almost be considered diminutive. In speaking however of their characteristic features, it should be understood that my observations are entirely confined to those who inhabit the southeastern borders of their territory. They are by no means a handsome race, for their features are for the most part short and irregular, their eyes small, sunken, black, and piercing, with a cunning and very frequently a sinister expression of countenance. Their dress is the same as that of the Garas, and likewise their arms, excepting that the double pointed stick is not commonly used among them. In their mode of salutation they touch each other's fingers in the manner of the Garas, but instead of kissing them afterwards, they bring their noses in contact with each other, side by side, and at the same time gently, though audibly, inhale the air through their nostrils. Their mode of subsistence follows their position; those of the interior live principally on milk and flesh, with now and then dates and a little *durah*, if they can afford to purchase it. The latter is ground in a mill called a *matakanét* (مطحنة), which consists of a flat oblong slab of stone, and a kind of rolling pin, moved backwards and forwards by a single person.—While the Bedwins of the interior live principally on milk and flesh, those on the coast seldom get any thing more than fish and dates. The fish they take, either in nets, or with a hook and line; but as few can afford to purchase either boat, or nets, and as they are not in the habit of using the inflated skin or *kirbah* (قربة), mentioned by Ptolemy, and so common on the coast to the northeastward of the bay of Kuria Muria, they drop their lines from the projecting shelves of cliffs, which overhang the sea.

have seen them with their shields and swords crawling down the precipitous side of *Ras Fartak*, which looks towards the bay of Al Kamar, where the cliffs in many parts, present a scarp 1,900 feet high; and our Pilot, who was from that neighbourhood, assured me that annually, one out of seven, or certainly one out of ten, perished from a false step, while prosecuting this perilous descent to obtain their daily food. Yet such is the force of habit and example handed-down from their forefathers, and also that of necessity, (for the extreme poverty of the different tribes admits of no pretext, under that of war, for any encroachment made by their neighbours on their several territories, in quest of food for man or beast,) that the *Bait Saloam* (ملوآم), who dwell on the barren ridge of *Ras Fartak*, have no other alternative than to descend daily for this miserable support, or perish above from a want of nourishment.

The Mahrah fishermen have also another contrivance for taking large sharks, and a species of ray exceeding sometimes fourteen feet in breadth, which frequents this coast. This consists in "rigging out a *darak*" (to use a nautical phrase) from the side of a cliff, with a pulley in the end of it, over which the line plays; in this way having chosen a favorable spot for fishing, they raise up sharks from eight to ten feet long; and having divested them of their fins, salt and dry the flesh for food, and sell the former to the Nakhudas of Bagalos, who trading along this coast purchase them for the China market. I may here mention that not only among the Mahrahs, but with all the inhabitants of the southeastern coast of Arabia, *Lahm* (لحم), or the dried flesh of sharks, is the staple article of food and commerce.

The Mahrahs are miserably poor, and their plains, mountains, and valleys, with the exception of the highland of *Hattob* (حطوب) close to Damköt, are rocky, sandy, and almost barren. They call the distant land lying due north of their coast, the *Arz-al-ahkaf*\* (ارض الاحقاف).

*Religion* they have little, or none. I was informed by our Pilot that it was only here and there on the coast that you met with a man, who could say his prayers, while the Bedwins of the interior were wholly devoid of religion, having no idea of God or devil, of heaven or of hell.

The Mahrah dialect, as spoken by the Mahrahs themselves, is the softest

and sweetest language I have ever heard; indeed, they appear to be so sensible of this, that they liken their *kalam d' Mhari* (كلام ذمها ري) as they term it, to the conversation of birds (مثل كلام ال طير). In my vocabulary I shall refrain from making any philological observations on it, preferring to leave this part open to the learned Secretary, whose extensive knowledge of the subject is so unquestionable that I am sure nothing will escape his notice, which is deserving of interesting or useful remark. All therefore that remains for me to do, is merely to offer the few preliminary observations which are necessary to convey to the reader an idea of the sounds of certain letters, and the pronunciation of the words in which they are introduced, leaving the *Arabic* spelling of the words exactly as they were written for me, by Mohammed bin Hamed *Mhari*, Pilot on board the H. C. Surveying Vessel *Patinurus*, in the Bay of Al Kamar, and resident of the village of *Ahsoel* (احصول), eight miles west of *Ras Fartak*.

## ACCENTS.

*Long accent* (-), *short accent* (˘), *diphthong* (◌◌).

## RENDERING OF VOWEL SOUND.\*

<i>u</i>	as	<i>u</i>	in	<i>but</i>	<i>oo</i>	as	<i>oo</i>	in	<i>boot</i>
<i>ee</i>	as	<i>ee</i>	in	<i>sce</i>	<i>ē</i>	as	<i>ay</i>	in	<i>say</i>
<i>i</i>	as	<i>i</i>	in	<i>thin</i>	<i>é</i>	as	<i>ey</i>	in	<i>they</i>
<i>o</i>	as	<i>o</i>	in	<i>note</i>	<i>ao</i>	as	<i>ow</i>	in	<i>how</i>

<sup>1</sup>, for the most part has not a broad sound; thus, *مهرا* with the Mahrah has almost the same sound as that of the proper name *Mary*.

*ج*, is generally pronounced soft; I may here remark that *صجرا* forms as good a word as can be adduced for the purpose of giving the different pro-

\* The system of orthography, followed by the author in his vocabulary of the Mahrah dialect, though not that usually followed in the Journal and other oriental publications, has been left unaltered except in the body of the notes, where it has been changed for that more commonly adopted by Orientalists.—

nunciations of this consonant along the southeastern coast of Arabia. Thus, it is pronounced as in *Hebrew*, by the inhabitants south of Maskat, and about Ras Al Had; *hard*, by the people of Dofar, and the inhabitants of the coast between Makalla and Aden; and *soft*, by the Mahrahs. By the first, it is called *Sair*; by the second, *Saghar*; and by the Mahrahs, *Sajar* or rather *Zājar*. Vide ص.\*

ش, has a very peculiar sound in the Mahrah dialect; it is formed by placing the tip of the tongue against the anterior part of the palate, and allowing the air to pass out of the mouth on one side or the other of it, in the manner of a lisp, following it with the sound of the letter *l*, as in شيوط *fire* pronounced *shleeote*.

ص, has the softer sound of the letter *z*, as in ما جر which is pronounced *Zājar*.

ع and غ, have their peculiar sounds, and sometimes the latter has the sound of *q* in *qui* (F) as in غبيج *man* pronounced *qaij*.

In the *English* spelling, however, of the Mahari words, I have endeavoured to give the pronunciation of the Mahari who dictated them to me, without much reference to the literal rendering of the Arabic character. This, which would be disadvantageous if the *Arabic* spelling was perfect, becomes the reverse in the present instance, where the pronunciation will frequently point out the inaccuracies of the Mahari orthography.

“*Notes on the Gara Tribe;*” continued from p. 201 *Journal* No. ix. p. 201. 1845.

Since my notes of last year were presented to the Society, I have again had an opportunity of mixing with the Gara tribe; which, while it afforded me the means of collecting a little more of their history, has enabled me to define more correctly the coast-limits of the district they occupy.

Formerly, these were stated to be the town of *Marbat* on the northeast,

\* In these observations the Arabic orthography of the names of three different portions of the south eastern Arabian Coast appears to be confounded: namely the tract of country called after the now desolate fort of *Al-Shihir* (الشحر) in lat; 14 38 30 N. longitude 49 27 35; the Cape of *Shajr*, شجر between Ras Fartak and Ras Marbat; and the town and district of *Sohar*, or *Zohar* صحار on the coast of Oman.—*Editor*.

and *Ras Al Sajron* the southwest, but, since I gathered this information from the inhabitants of *Dofar*, an intercourse with the *Mahrabs* and *Garas* in the bay of *Al Kamar*, during its survey, has enabled me to fix with more accuracy the exact line or neutral ground of demarcation between the two tribes on the west; while as regards the east, I have elicited from different sources the fact, that the *Beni Gara* are the sole inhabitants of the *Sabban* mountains, which extend from *Marbat* to *Hasek*. Hence it will appear, that, instead of *Marbat* and *Ras Al Sajar* being the true limits of their coast, the village of *Hasek* will be the northeast, and, as ascertained from the united testimony of the *Mahrabs* and *Garas* in the bay of *Al Kamar*, *Ras Tharbat Alee* ظربت علي will be the southeast termination of their maritime boundary. Between *Ras Tharbat Alee* and *Damkot*, there are as many *Mahrabs* as *Garas*, therefore this interval may be considered neutral ground.

Respecting the *Tribes*, whose several districts come next the confines of the mountainous tract inhabited by the *Beni Gara*, I have not been able to obtain much satisfactory information. The *Mahrabs* come next to them in the bay of *Al Kamar*, but at *Hasek* there are remnants of several tribes, the principal of which are the *Gara* قرا, *Mahra* مهرا, *Afar* عفار, *Hassarit* حسريت, and the *Baramah* برمعه; while all the towns in *Dofar*, with the exception of *Tagah* and *Marbat*, are inhabited by the *Al Kathiri* ال كئيري, who originally came from *Hadramaut*, and are always at war with the *Beni Gara*. Next the *Garas*, inland, I am told, are the *Thoar* طور, a large branch of the *Mahrah* tribe, the *Afar*, also a large tribe, and the *Al Kathiri*; these inhabit the table land called *Nejd*, or *Nejdi* نجد و نجد ي, on which the frankincense tree grows, two days inland from the shore.

The *Mahrabs* and *Garas* affirm that they are descended from the ancient *Hamyari*, and that the *Afar* and *Al Kathiri* are descended from the *Ghafiri* غافري

*The following are some of the principal branches of the Gara tribe.*

BENI GARA OR HAKLI.

بني قرا حكلي

Bin Kabtan.....	بن قحطن.....	Báit Kashob.....	كشوب.....
Báit Mashanee.....	ما شني.....	—Jacob.....	جبوب.....
—Ayesa ( <i>Esau</i> ).....	عيسا.....	—Ghajod.....	قجاود.....
—Makheir.....	مخير.....	—Said.....	سعيد.....
—Tabok.....	طبوك.....	—Témin.....	تيمن.....

Several of the Garas assured me that Gara and Koreish were synonymous,\* and that the latter was their ancient appellation. But to ascertain this more satisfactorily, I took the opportunity of asking the chief Shaikh of the Garas, in the presence of an influential Saiad, with whom I was then staying, if it were from his tribe that the prophet Mohammed sprung, and what was the ancient name of his tribe? To the former he replied in the affirmative, to the latter, "the Koreish." In both instances he was uncontradicted by the Saiad. By another person, however, who was called upon in the presence of a large assembly, as an authority in matters of history, to give me some information about the neighbouring tribes, I was told that the Garas and the Koreish were *not* the same people. Here the question rests, so far as I had an opportunity of determining it, but, as the matter is not altogether devoid of interest, I relate the observations for whatever, in the hands of others, they may prove worth.

Besides Gara, they are also called Haklee, and at the present time the two terms are used synonymously, though the first is by far the most general appellative.

The *Kahtan* family or branch, is considered the head or root of the Garas, and the Shaikh of this family, the Shaikh of the Garas; Salim bin Thoorec bin Kahtan, is the name of the present Shaikh; it was this man, who in a *blood feud*, murdered Saiad Mohammed bin Ageyl, the late governor of Dofar. Standing erect, he is full six feet high, finely proportioned, with most manly and handsome features, combining, with a generous expression of countenance, all the gentleness and determination, that could be sought for in the most chivalrous character. Though the murderer of the last governor of Dofar, (under whose sage but severe discipline that district was restored from the wretchedness of the worst state of anarchy, to a condition of ease and prosperity, and whose loss, by all the tribes inhabiting Dofar and its neighbourhood, has not failed for the last fourteen years, to prove a source of the most bitter lamentation) this man, (ignorant of the crime he had committed, in the eyes of an Englishman, and satisfied of the rectitude of his conduct as a Gara Chief,) calmly asked, why the English, knowing the extreme fertility of the district of Dofar, and the wretched state of the inhabitants for want of a ruler, did not send some one to take the country, and give them the benefit of our good Government. The

\* The Koreish being the tribe from which the Prophet Mohammed derived, his origin, is it not probable, that if there be any truth in this assertion, the tribe of Garas derive their appellation from having early possessed, a knowledge of letters, as the word *Kara* قرأ literally signifies one who practises reading?—*Editor.*

*Kahtan* family are regarded as the great fighting men of the *Gara* tribe, and it is said that five *Kahtans* are enough to put to flight the whole of the *Beni Gara*.

To shew the faithful manner in which the duties of *Rabeea* ربيع, or *Protector*, are discharged in this tribe; how a man having a *blood feud* with another party may enter with security the territory of his adversaries; and under what circumstances a *blood feud* may be established, I may mention the following act of one of the *Kahtan* family, who accompanied a friend as *Rabeea*, from the mountains behind *Dofar* to the town of *Silalah*. When arrived in *Silalah*, two of the *Rabeea's* cousins approached the man whom he was protecting, and assailed him on account of a *blood feud*, which formerly existed between them. The *Rabeea*, (now the decrepit figure, of a once tall and powerful man, and who was sitting by me, when the *Saiad*, with whom I was staying, related the story,) faithful to his pledge, and having no alternative but to slay his cousins, did so, with as many blows of his sword, while the friend whom he protected fled back to the hills, and the *Rabeea* claimed the *Saiad's* protection until a large party arrived from the mountains to guard, and conduct him back to his own clan. In this act, we observe the binding nature of the pledge,—the *Rabeea* opening a *blood feud* with another party, his own relations for the sake of faithfully discharging the duties of the office he had undertaken. Such instances of fidelity are by no means uncommon among the wild and ignorant *Bedwins*. The *blood feud*, as a matter of course, is greatly dreaded by all, for it not only immediately excites families to mortal combat, but if remaining unsettled, which is most commonly the case, entails all the misery and bloodshed connected with it on the next generation, by whom, if not satisfactorily decided, it must descend to the third and fourth, and so on, until it is either amicably arranged or entirely forgotten. Thus, with the two men murdered by the *Rabeea* above mentioned, who belonged to a distant branch of his own family, their sons are still boys, but when they arrive at manhood, they will be expected by their nearest relations to take up the *blood feud*, occasioned by the murder of their fathers, and will either kill the old *Rabeea*, or if he be dead, two of his branch of the family. A *blood feud*, such as this is, arising between two branches of the same family, is considered the worst; it is blood against blood. In the assault of the young men, when they are grown up, on the *Rabeea's* family, they themselves may be killed, or instead of only killing two of the *Rabeea's* family, they may mortally wound three; in the first instance, instead of a *blood feud*, on account of two, there will be one of four against the *Rabeea's* family, while in the second instance, a *blood feud* will still exist between the families on account of the murder of a third person,—one more than was required from the *Rabeea's* side.

The difficulties which attend a *blood feud* may be endless, and the conse-

quences are disastrous, and although they tend greatly to restrain the Bedwin from committing bloodshed, and contribute much to protect his life, yet they are too often disregarded by this "wild man," who under the influence of passion will frequently commit murder on the most trivial occasion.

Note. For Gharah غارة read Gara قرا in my "Notes on the Gharah Tribe" published in No. ix of this Journal. It is also written قره H. J. C.

### VOCABULARY OF THE MAHRAH DIALECT.

English	Arabic	Maharee	Pron: of Maharee.
Age.....	عمر.....	عامر.....	āmar
Angry.....	غضبان.....	مغتيظ.....	maghateeth
Arms Pl. (body).....	الاذرع.....	حيد وتن.....	haidotan
Army.....	عسكر.....	عسكر.....	askēr
Ant.....	نملة.....	نوميل.....	nomeel
Antimony.....	كحل ائمد.....	كا حل.....	kahil
Appetite.....	توق.....	توك.....	tōq
Anchor.....	.....	بوهرت.....	boharat
Ashes.....	رما د.....	راميد.....	rameet
Arrow.....	سهوم.....	سهوم.....	sahom
As before.....	كما اول.....	هاش هو الا.....	hash hawalee
Above.....	فوق.....	حغلا.....	haghla
Afterwards.....	بعد.....	مغورا.....	maghora
Always.....	د ايجا.....	دويم ذ اوقات.....	doem da aukat
B.			
Bad.....	شريب.....	يغموم.....	yaghmom
Bravery.....	بلا طة.....	حرويبي.....	harobee
Back.....	ظهر.....	ظحر موئن.....	dhara mōthan
Bone.....	عظم.....	عظظ.....	athêth
Blood.....	دم.....	دم.....	doom
Belly.....	بطن.....	جوف.....	djof
Brother.....	اخ.....	غاك.....	ghak
Blind.....	اعمي.....	عوريت.....	awareet

Body.....	جسد.....	جماد.....	jassēd
Beard.....	لحية.....	الحيت.....	albēt
Bowels.....	مصارين.....	مشغين.....	mosghén
Bread.....	خبز.....	خابز.....	khābs
Butter.....	زبد.....	خزرات.....	khazarēt
Black.....	اسود.....	حور.....	haowar
Blue.....	كحلي.....	حور.....	haowar
Bracelet.....	ساورا قرطه.....	مناكت.....	matakēt
Book.....	كتاب.....	كتوب.....	katob
Bed (of sleep).....	سرير.....	جودري (ذاشنت).....	jodaree d ashan't
Battle (land).....	قتال.....	غورت.....	ghorāt
Barren.....	مسمال.....	هيور.....	h'oor
Brook.....	جدول.....	هذ هبوت ذنهر.....	hazabōt d'nahr
Branch.....	عصن.....	رناك.....	ratāt
Bark.....	قشرا لشجرة.....	قشירות.....	kasheeroot
Blade of grass.....	السرخ.....	رهوت.....	rahoot
Brass.....	نحاس.....	نحوس.....	nahos
Bite.....	عصه.....	صوب.....	sob
Bitterness.....	صرارة.....	صيرير.....	mareer
Blow.....	لكمة.....	الكماك.....	alkamēt
Bird.....	طير.....	عقاب.....	agāb
Bug.....	.....	كتون.....	kāton
Bridle.....	لجام.....	غيناك.....	ghāianej
Bull.....	ثور.....	ثور.....	thor
Bow.....	قوس.....	مندافات.....	mandofēt
Boat.....	سنبوق.....	سنبوق.....	sambook
Bee (honey).....	نحل.....	هانوبات.....	hanobēt
Beak (of bird).....	منقار.....	اخوه.....	akhoh
Behind.....	خلف ورا.....	منغيرا.....	manghēira
Below.....	تحت.....	مصا.....	amsa
Bad.....	بطل.....	يغموم.....	yaghmom
Balance.....	میزان.....	میزون.....	meezon
Brain.....	دماغ.....	دماغ.....	damagh